

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER**

**18TH JUNE 2014 (6PM)**

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**Present:**

Councillors: S J Williams (Chairman), C Rogers (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, G W Ballinger, R Bishop, C Brewer, J-P Campion, S J M Clee, A R Clent, E Davies, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, B T Glass, D R Godwin, J Greener, P B Harrison, J A Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, V Higgs, A T Hingley, J Holden, L Hyde, M B Kelly, N Knowles, R J L Lloyd, B McFarland, C D Nicholls, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J W Parish, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, A M Sewell, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, M J S Stooke, P W Wooldridge, M J W Wrench and G C Yarranton.

**C.1 Prayers**

Prayers were said by Reverend Robert Barnett from Offmore Evangelical Church, Kidderminster.

**C.2 Election of Chairman**

Councillor S J Williams was nominated as Chairman. This was moved by Councillor M J Hart and seconded by N J Desmond.

**Decision: Councillor S J Williams be elected as Chairman of Wyre Forest District Council for the ensuing municipal year.**

**C.3 Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

After being invested with his Chain of Office, Councillor S J Williams made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman, and expressed his thanks for his election.

**C.4 Chairman's Response**

The Chairman thanked Members for the great honour and would strive to be apolitical and treat all Officers and Councillors with respect.

**C.5 Retiring Chairman**

The retiring chairman was thanked for her hard work over the past 12 months.

She had been a fair chairman and had served the area of Wyre Forest well and had raised a substantial amount of money for her chosen charities.

**C.6 Retiring Chairman – Presentation of Badges**

The retiring chairman was presented with a Past Chairman's badge. Councillor F M Oborski thanked Council for giving her a wonderful year during which she had celebrated 40 years of being in a councillor in Wyre Forest District Council. She had attended 112 events and she thanked her vice-chairman, Daniel McCann. She made some presentations and thanked Karen Walsh, the Executive Support Officers, Sue Saunders and Louisa Bright, without whom she could not have performed her role.

She informed Members that she had had 3 consorts, Councillor Mike Price was her main one, but Tim Ingham and Mike Salter had helped out when they were needed. She had raised at least £6,200 for her 2 chosen charities and wanted to especially thank the West Midlands Safari Park for the donations they had made. She wished the new chairman a successful year.

**C.7 Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

Councillor M J Hart nominated Councillor C Rogers as Vice-Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor N J Desmond.

**Decision: Councillor C Rogers be elected as Vice-Chairman of Wyre Forest District Council for the ensuing municipal year.**

**C.8 Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

After being invested with his Badge of Office, Councillor C Rogers made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman.

**C.9 Vice Chairman's Response**

Councillor C Rogers informed Members that he would fulfil the duties and trust placed upon him.

**C.10 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence

**C.11 Declarations of Interests by Members**

There were no declarations of interests.

**C.12 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and the minutes of the Special meetings held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the**

**Chairman.**

**C.13 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**C.14 Questions**

There were no questions to Council.

**C.15 Chairman's Communications**

Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting.

The Chairman informed Members that his chosen charities were Help for Heroes and Kidderminster Museum of Carpet.

**C.16 Political and Constitutional Structures 2014/2015**

Council received a report from the Solicitor to the Council on the proposed political and constitutional structures for 2014/2015.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and referred Members to the revised political balance at appendix 4 and a tabled copy of committee appointments at appendix 2. He hoped that the Chamber would agree with the proposals and that some of the opposition groups would take up appointments under the proposals. Councillor J Phillips had been proposed as vice-chairman for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor J A Shaw presented an amendment asking for an additional scrutiny committee to be introduced as the current one had too much information being presented at committees.

A robust debate ensued on the amendment and upon a vote the amendment was lost.

Councillor J A Shaw nominated Councillor V Higgs to be Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and upon a vote, this was lost.

Members were informed that the proposed names on the outside bodies list would be the ones appointed.

Upon a vote for the substantive item, this was carried.

**Decision:**

- 1. The proposed Political Management Structure for 2014/2015 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.**
- 2. The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees as contained in**

**the amended Appendix 2 of the report to Council which was tabled at the meeting be agreed.**

- 3. The Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 3 of the report to Council be adopted.**
- 4. The appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 4 of the report to Council be agreed.**
- 5. The revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 5 of the report to Council be agreed.**
- 6. The revised chart of the political balance distributed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014, at Appendix 6 be approved.**

### **C.17 Electoral Review**

Council considered a report from the Chief Executive detailing the response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's consultation on warding arrangements.

The Leader of the Council took Members through the report and proposed that the name of the Severn Valley ward be changed to Wribbenhall and Lickhill ward. An amendment by the Labour Party was tabled that proposed that the Council objects to the Boundary Commission proposals and asked for a written response from the Boundary Commission on why its proposals for Wyre Forest appeared to be contrary to its own guidelines. A robust debate took place and the key highlights were:

- The Council should not lose 9 councillors and the ward boundaries should not be changed.
- It did not make sense to have Blakedown & Chaddesley, Cookley and Wolverley wards together, it would be far too big a ward.
- Political Groups should submit their own responses to the Boundary Commission.
- Another option was for the proposed new ward boundaries to be based on the County boundaries in order to avoid confusion for residents. It was recognised that this implied a council size of 30 members rather than 33.

Councillors G W Ballinger and D R Sheppard left the meeting at 19.17pm and returned at 19.18pm.

It was pointed out that the Council found itself in this position because Members had voted against four yearly elections.

Upon a vote, the amendment was lost.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

The Leader of the Council referred back to the recommendations in the report and upon a vote these were carried.

**Decision:**

- 1. The proposals of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for eleven 3 member wards be noted, while expressing strong concerns about whether some of them comply with the Boundary Commission's own policies and asking for a written response from the Commission on why its proposals for Wyre Forest appear to be contrary to its own guidelines;**
- 2. Individual political groups be encouraged to submit their own responses.**
- 3. The Council's response at appendix A of the report to Council be agreed and submitted to the Boundary Commission subject to an additional comment that the proposed Severn Valley ward be named the Wribbenhall and Lickhill ward.**

Councillor P V Hayward left the meeting at this point, (19.40pm).

**C.18 Leader of the Council Announcements and Report**

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

- The Leader of the Council informed Members he was delighted that Bewdley Museum had won an award for the best small museum in the Midlands and said that the work done by staff and volunteers was excellent.
- The Council's Data Management Officer, had picked up a double award for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running and the Senior Forward Planning Officer had been shortlisted for Young Planner of the year.

**C.19 Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2013/2014**

Council received the schedule of Members' Annual Reports which gave details of activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2013/2014 municipal year and received a record of attendance.

**Decision: The reports and attendance be noted.**

**C.20 Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2013/2014**

Council received the Annual reports from the Leader of the Council, the Chairman of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Ethics and Standards Committee.

**Decision: The Annual Reports for the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Ethics and Standards Committee be**

**noted.**



**C.21 Motions Submitted Under Standing Order No. D1 (1)**

Councillor F M Oborski of the Liberal & Independent Group presented the motion and informed Members that the Council had achieved a lot with getting young people involved in activities and felt that the Council should work with local organisations to engage young people.

Councillor D Sheppard left the meeting at this point, (7.49pm).

A discussion took place and Members felt that young people had the unheard voice in communities so by working with organisations, this could encourage more young people to get involved with the Council.

Councillor D Sheppard returned to the meeting at this point, (7.52pm).

A Member perceived that perhaps this was an item for the Overview & Scrutiny to consider

**Decision:**

**The following motion from Councillors F M Oborski and J Phillips, Liberal & Independent Group be agreed:**

***Council recognises the importance of encouraging the young people of the District to involve themselves in the Civic life of the District. Council therefore requests the Cabinet to work with the Local Children's Trust, Youth Cabinet Members, Positive Activities providers and the voluntary Youth Movements to develop a District Youth Council and Young People's Mayor.***

**C.22 Urgent Motions Submitted Under Standing Order No. D1 (7)**

No notices of motion were received.

**C.23 Half Yearly Report of the Chief Executive**

Council received a half yearly report from the Chief Executive.

In response to a question, the Chief Executive advised Members that Lawrences Recycling Centre had gone into administration but the Council would not give up hope of obtaining some of its money back and would continue to pursue.

**Decision: The report be noted.**

The meeting ended at 20.18pm.