

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER

23RD MAY 2018 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: D Little (Chairman), J-P Champion (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, J Baker, S J Chambers, M Cheeseman, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, N Harris, J A Hart, M J Hart, K Henderson, N Knowles, N Martin, S Miah, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, J A Shaw, J D Smith, A Totty, R J Vale, S J Walker BCav, G Webster, H S Williams and S J Williams.

C.1 Prayers

Prayers were said by Rev. Simon Harry, Minister of Bewdley Baptist Church.

C.2 Election of Chairman

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

Decision: Councillor S 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.

C.4 Chairman's Response

The Chairman thanked Members for his appointment as Chairman. He felt it was a great honour to be given the opportunity to take on the role again. He said he would endeavour to be a good ambassador for both the Council and the District. He announced that his charity would be the Kidderminster Hospital League of Friends, and it was his intention to appoint a Chaplain to advise and help him during his term of office.

C.5 Retiring Chairman

The Leader of the Council thanked the retiring Chairman, Councillor D Little, for his hard work over the past 12 months. He had represented the Council at many civic engagements across both the Wyre Forest District and wider

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Worcestershire County, accompanied at many of the functions by his consort, Mrs Shirley Little.

The retiring Chairman was presented with a Past Chairman's badge. Councillor D Little said it had been an exciting and challenging year as Chairman of Wyre Forest District Council. He thanked his fellow Members for giving him the opportunity to represent the Council. He said that he and his wife had visited many interesting venues and had been received everywhere with excellent regard, and community spirit was thriving across all the Districts he had visited. He thanked the Corporate Leadership Team and Officers across the Council for all the guidance and support they had given to him throughout the year, and in particular Karen Walsh who had ensured he was fully briefed prior to any engagements he was due to attend. He gave special thanks to his wife, Shirley, for her support as his Consort. He announced that he had raised £3,000 for his charities; Macmillan Nurses and Worcestershire Air Ambulance. He wished the new Chairman a most successful year in office.

C.6 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor M J Hart nominated Councillor K Henderson as Vice-Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor C Rogers.

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

C.7 Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

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

C.8 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V Higgs and R Wilson.

C.9 Declarations of Interests by Members

There were no declarations of interests.

C.10 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.11 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C.12 Questions

One question had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order A5 by Members of the Council.

The Chairman joined Councillor S Miah in wishing the District's Muslim community a happy Ramadan.

Question from Councillor S Miah to the Leader of the Council

What information was provided to the council, and thereby what commitments were made by the County Council for the provision of a bus route including the provision of bus bays along the Hoobrook Link Road?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I think the essence of the question goes back to the time the Hoobrook Link Road was being constructed, and if there would be a bus route along Silverwoods Way servicing the new houses and in particular the Wyre Forest Leisure Centre. I do not believe there was any absolute firm commitment from the County Council that there would be a bus route because of course Diamond Buses, as the commercial operator at the time, would have to agree to a commercial route. At the time the best endeavours of the District Council were used to try and persuade a commercial operator to provide a bus route along there. Therefore I do not believe there was any commitment given by the County Council for an actual bus route or indeed to provide bus bays along the Hoobrook Link Road.

Supplementary question from Councillor S Miah

I understand that the new Area Manager for Diamond Buses has expressed an interest in directing some of the buses via Silverwoods Way, and last week Council Officers confirmed to Councillor F M Oborski that they would be willing to talk to Diamond Buses regarding this. Therefore looking forward could the Leader set out the strategies he would put in place to enable buses to stop along the Hoobrook Link Road and as Leader would he consider our proposal whereby buses would be allowed to enter the Leisure Centre and use the coach parking bay or the drop-off point?

Supplementary answer from the Leader of the Council

We support and encourage public transport to go along Silverwoods Way; we never promised it. We said that we would use our best endeavours to lobby Diamond Buses to provide a bus route. I have heard that the new Manager of Diamond may now be interested in operating that service. What I will commit to as Leader is doing all that I can to encourage the County Council to try and make that happen. You were not the first person to think that buses could pull into the Leisure Centre, we also think that as well and will use our best endeavours to achieve it.

C.13 Chairman's Communications

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

C.14 Political and Constitutional Structures 2018/2019

Council received a report from the Solicitor to the Council on the proposed political and constitutional structures for the municipal year 2018/2019.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and drew Members' attention to pages 60 and 61 of the report (appendix 6 Appointments to Outside Bodies) which had been updated with the North Worcestershire representation following the meeting of the Leaders of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest District Councils on 16th May 2018. He moved all the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor N Knowles advised that Councillor N Martin had withdrawn her nomination for appointment to the Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He moved several amendments en bloc to the appointments to outside bodies. Upon a show of hands the amendments were lost.

Decision:

- 1.1 The revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be agreed.**
- 1.2 The proposed Political Management Structure of committees for 2018/2019 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.**
- 1.3 The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees as contained in Appendix 3 of the report be agreed.**
- 1.4 The Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4 of the report be adopted.**
- 1.5 The revised chart of political balance as set out in Appendix 5 of the report be approved.**
- 1.6 The appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 6 of the report be agreed.**
- 1.7 The membership of the Audit Committee to include an independent person in accordance with the process detailed in the report be amended.**
- 1.8 The Solicitor to the Council be authorised to settle any outstanding details relating to the political structures and to make changes as necessary to the Council's Constitution to**

give effect to the Council's decisions and any other revisions necessary to reflect needs or circumstances.

C.15 Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2017/2018

Council received the schedule of Members' Activity reports which gave details of activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2017/2018 municipal year and a record of attendance.

Decision: The reports and attendance be noted.

C.16 Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2017/2018

Council received the annual reports from the Leader of the Council, and the Chairmen 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.17 Leader of the Council Announcements

The Leader of the Council referred Members to his tabled report.

C.18 Motions Submitted under Standing Orders

One motion had been received in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1).

"This Council recognises that discarded plastics and non-recyclable cups are a major environmental pollutant.

Council therefore resolves to:

- 1. Cease the use of single use plastic water cups and replace them with washable reusable alternatives.*
- 2. Request our caterers to replace all non-recyclable hot drink containers with suitable environmentally friendly alternatives."*

Councillor F M Oborski MBE presented the motion. She said she hoped it would be a fairly small step for the authority to take but it was a very important step which would indicate that the dangers of plastic pollution were taken seriously by the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Well-being, Councillor C Rogers, tabled an amendment to the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group, which was accepted by Councillor Oborski.

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Councillor Rogers outlined the reasons for the amendment. He said his Cabinet role involved sustainability and it was important to keep an eye on the bigger picture. He said that if we stopped using recycled and recyclable plastics for packaging and other uses, there would be a greater demand for paper based products which in turn could result in the devastation of the Rain Forests. A discussion ensued and the majority of Members spoke in support of the motion.

Upon a show of hands, the motion as amended was agreed.

Decision: The following motion received from the Independent and Liberal Democrat Group, as amended by the Conservative Group be agreed:

- 1. Council notes that the disposable plastic cups used at the Wyre Forest House water dispensers in the public areas are in fact recycled and on that basis sees no merit in restricting their use.**
- 2. Council agrees that in staff areas disposable cups are to be withdrawn with immediate effect.**
- 3. Council requests our caterers to replace all non-recyclable hot drink containers with suitable environmentally friendly alternatives.**

C.19 Urgent Motions submitted under Standing Orders

There were no urgent motions.

C.20 Policy And Budget Framework

a. Recommendations from the Cabinet – 27th March 2018

- Capital Strategy 2018-21**

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the recommendations. He said that the Capital Strategy was good practice for the authority and brought together a number of strategies that the Council currently had in this area into one document. He added that the new document clearly set out the processes involved and criteria for all the Council's future investments and more importantly sets out the potential risks involved.

Decision:

- 1.1 The Capital Strategy 2018-21 including the associated Quantitative Indicators in Appendix 1 and the updated Strategy for Capital Portfolio Fund set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**
- 1.2 The limits for gross debt of non treasury investments**

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compared to net service expenditure and for commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be approved.

- 1.3 The limits for loan investments as set out in Section 5.1 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**

C.21 Elections Fees and Charges

Council considered a report from the Returning Officer which proposed a revision to the fees to be charged for local elections, referendums and polls. The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report and advised that the proposal was to use a simplified, per elector approach. He added that consultation had been undertaken with the Parish Councils, and support for the simplified system had been received.

Decision: The revised scheme of fees and charges for local elections and referendums set out in appendix A of the report with effect from 1 June 2018, be adopted.

C.22 Community Governance Review: Wolverley & Cookley

Council received a report from the Chief Executive which sought approval of the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review (CGR) for Wolverley and Cookley and arrangements for a local advisory poll.

The Leader of the Council moved the recommendations and outlined the background to the request. He said that the matter had been discussed at a meeting of the Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council and there was unanimous support for the residents to have their say on the issue.

In response to a question relating to the deadline for registering to vote, Members were advised the deadline for registration would be in the latter part of June 2018 and steps would be taken to raise public awareness about the date.

Upon a show of hands, full support for the proposal was given.

Decision:

- 1.1 A Community Governance Review of Wolverley and Cookley should be held, commencing on 24 May 2018;**
- 1.2 The Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review should be as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;**
- 1.3 A local advisory poll should be held on Thursday 12 July 2018 under section 116 of the Local Government Act 2003;**
- 1.4 The question to be asked in the local advisory poll, together with the franchise and other procedural rules for the local poll, should be as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;**

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- 1.5 The Solicitor of the Council be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any minor modifications to the Terms of Reference prior to publication in order to comply with legislation and statutory guidance;**
- 1.6 The Returning Officer (as counting officer) be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to supplement the rules for the advisory poll as set out in rule 12 in Appendix 2 of the report.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.50pm.