

Meeting of the Council

Minutes - 9 November 2016

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Barry Findlay (Con)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Elias Mattu (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Ian Angus
Cllr Harbans Bagri
Cllr Harman Banger
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman
Cllr Payal Bedi-Chadha
Cllr Peter Bilson
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Ian Claymore
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Evans

Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Val Gibson
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal
Cllr Andrew Johnson
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Welcome Koussoukama
Cllr Roger Lawrence
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Hazel Malcolm
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Peter O'Neill

Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Christopher Haynes
Cllr Christine Mills
Cllr Patricia Patten
Cllr Arun Photay

Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Andrew Wynne

UKIP

Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett

Employees

Keith Ireland
Kevin O'Keefe
Mark Taylor
Tracey Christies
Ross Cook
Colin Parr
Laura Phillips
Jaswinder Kaur
Julia Cleary

Managing Director
Director of Governance
Director of Finance
Head of Legal Services
Service Director – City Environment
Head of Governance
Strategic Business Manager
Democratic Services Manager
Scrutiny and Systems Manager

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. *Title*

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jonathan Yardley.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interests made.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Mayor proposed, the Leader seconded, and it was resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 September 2016, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

The Late Former Councillor John Shelley

The Mayor announced that it was with great sadness that we had learned of the death of, former Councillor John Shelley on the 3 November 2016. The Mayor extended the council's sincere condolences to John Shelley's family. The Leader then paid tribute to Gwen Stafford-Good and John Shelley.

The council stood in silent tribute to John Shelley.

Councillor Phil Bateman

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Phil Bateman on winning the LGiU Communicator of the Year Award at the seventh annual LGiU & CCLA Councillor Achievement Awards Ceremony.

Remembrance Events

The Mayor advised that he would be attending three Services of Remembrance between the 11 and 13 November, 2016.

1. Armistice Day – 11th of the 11th

The Mayor invited councillors to the Royal British Legion City of Wolverhampton Central Branch's annual Armistice Day Service which was taking place on Friday 11 November, 2016 at 10:50 am at the Cenotaph.

2. Dutch War Graves

The Mayor invited councillors to attend the annual Service for Dutch Soldiers buried at Jeffcock Road cemetery which was taking place on Saturday 12 November, 2016, at 10am at Merridale Cemetery.

3. Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor informed councillors of the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Service which was taking place on Sunday, 13 November.

United Nations Orange the World campaign

The Mayor informed councillors of the United Nations' Orange the World campaign, which was an international campaign to end violence against women and girls.

Prince Albert 150 Celebrating Wolverhampton Events

The Mayor informed councillors of the programme of events in celebration Wolverhampton's iconic Prince Albert statue turning 150 years old on the 30 November 2016.

Civic Carol Service

The Mayor invited Councillors to the Civic Carol Service which was taking place on Tuesday, 13 December at 5pm at Darlington Street Methodist Church.

5 Implementing the Devolution Agreement - Mayoral Combined Authority Functions

The Leader presented the summary of consultation responses in respect of the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Scheme. The development of the draft West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2016 was brought to the Council's attention, due to the draft Order not being available for consideration; agreement was sought that Cabinet consider the draft Order. Councillor Wendy Thompson would be invited to the Cabinet meeting to comment on the draft Order.

The Council were informed there were two outstanding issues around voting and non-transport borrowing which required resolution; however the Leader was optimistic that the Chair of the WMCA would acquire a solution which was acceptable to all. The Leader commended the work of the WMCA Chair.

The Leader highlighted the investment opportunities the devolution deal would provide to Wolverhampton and the wider region.

The recommendations were moved by the Leader and seconded by Councillor Peter Bilson.

Councillor Wendy Thompson welcomed the report and recognised the benefits devolution would provide.

Resolved:

1. That the development of the draft West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2016 to date, detailed in appendix A of the report be noted.

2. That the draft Order is considered and, if appropriate, approved (subject to minor and drafting amendments) at Cabinet on 30 November 2016 be agreed, as elements require government response and approval. Constituent Council approvals pending, Cabinet approval will ensure the Order can be laid in Parliament following the Combined Authority consideration of the Order on 9 December 2016.
3. The summary of consultation results in respect of the Mayoral WMCA Scheme, as submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 5 September 2016, be noted.

6 Financial Plan and Efficiency Strategy

Councillor Andrew Johnson sought approval to publish the Financial Plan and Efficiency Strategy. The updated Financial Plan and Efficiency Strategy provides further evidence to support the Council's submission for a four year central government funding settlement which will enable the Council to operate with increased financial certainty in the medium term.

Councillor Andrew Johnson commended the work of Michelle Howell and colleagues in making the plan accessible and robust.

Councillor Andrew Johnson proposed and Councillor Peter Bilson seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Wendy Thompson stated the four year plan was useful however was concerned about the impact of phasing out of government grant funding and retention of business rates. She highlighted that businesses needed to be supported to grow further and survive to ensure the Council received sufficient funds to provide services.

Councillor Andrew Johnson recognised the importance of businesses growing and added that the WMCA was participating in a pilot of 100% retention of business rates and this would allow the Council to exert influence on the pilot.

Resolved:

That the final Financial Plan and Efficiency Strategy be approved for publication, following presentation of the draft document to Cabinet on 19 October 2016 and the delegation of authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to agree the final amendments to the Financial Plan and Efficiency Strategy.

7 Wolverhampton Interchange Programme

Councillor John Reynolds presented an update on the Wolverhampton Interchange Programme. Cabinet Resources Panel received a report on the Wolverhampton Interchange Programme and was recommended that a contribution of £10.7 million from the West Midlands Combined Authority be accepted and that the capital budget

be increased to reflect the additional expenditure and associated funding, with the completion of associated legal agreements delegated to the Director of Governance.

Approval was sought that the Council underwrite additional costs of up to £8.1 million for the programme and included this in the capital budget, funded initially through prudential borrowing, recognising that it was the expectation that external funding would be secured in due course to fund the additional costs.

Councillor John Reynolds proposed and Councillor Andrew Johnson seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Wendy Thompson and Councillor Malcolm Gwinnet raised concern around the considerable cost to be incurred, however welcomed the improvements to the railway station and recognised that the area around the station also required investment.

Councillor Andrew Johnson clarified the two options available should external funding not be secured.

Councillor John Reynolds agreed to share further information on borrowing with Councillor Wendy Thomson and Councillor Malcolm Gwinnet.

Resolved:

1. That the Council underwrites additional costs of £8.1 million initially funded through prudential borrowing with the expectation that external funding would be secured in due course be approved.
2. That the capital programme was updated to reflect the additional budget required be approved.

8 Community Governance Review

Councillor Andrew Johnson advised that the Council had received a formal request (dated 8 April 2016) for a community governance review, specifically in relation to Tettenhall Wightwick and Tettenhall Regis, to which it had a statutory obligation to respond. As the request meets the legislative criteria for triggering a review, the Council had a duty to arrange a community governance review. The Special Advisory Group had considered a report on the proposed approach for doing so.

Councillor Andrew Johnson proposed and Councillor Milkinder Jaspal seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Andrew Wynn welcomed the report and highlighted that the decision making process would be brought closer to the people. He commended the officers in preparing the report.

Resolved:

1. That a community governance review be conducted for the whole of Wolverhampton but with more detailed work in the Tettenhall area be agreed.

2. That the draft terms of reference for a community governance review of the whole of the city be agreed.
3. That in principle, that the Special Advisory Group, to act as the lead committee for the review process, ultimately making recommendations to Council for the city's community governance arrangements be agreed.
4. That it be noted, the costs of the review, to include resourcing the review itself and the associated consultation, have yet to be quantified but will be reported to the Special Advisory Group in due course.
5. That the proposed timetable for the review be noted.

9 **Proposed Revised Petitions Scheme**

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the revised petitions arrangements following the dissolution of the Petitions Committee and outlined the new arrangements for considering petitions from the public. Councillor Andrew Johnson proposed the recommendations.

Councillor Milkinder Jaspal seconded the recommendations and added that the arrangements outlined would ensure members of the public received speedier responses and that relevant councillors would also be updated on the response.

Councillor Wendy Thompson requested that the summary of responses detailed the relevant amount of information and that summary responses also be reported to the Shadow Leader's office.

Councillor Andrew Johnson agreed to the request.

Resolved:

1. a. That petitions with fewer than 2,499 signatures be considered and responded to by employees, within 28 days of receipt by the relevant service area. A summary of responses would be reported to Scrutiny Board, the relevant Cabinet Member(s), Shadow Leader's office and, where appropriate, the relevant Ward Members.
- b. That petitions with 2,500-4,999 signatures be considered by the relevant scrutiny panel with recommendations made for action by employees or review by the Executive as appropriate.
- c. That petitions with 5,000+ signatures be considered by the Council as per the existing arrangements.

10 **Motions on Notice**

Local impact of national cuts to community pharmacies

Councillor Phil Bateman moved the following motion:

That this Council notes with concern the government announcement on 14 October 2016 that it is reducing funding for community pharmacies by £113m in the four months from December 2016 - March 2017.

This equated to an average loss of £8,000 for each pharmacy in Wolverhampton, representing a 12% cut. In addition the timing of this announcement means it is required to be delivered in a very short time scale, leaving local pharmacies very little time to plan or implement.

A further cut of £208m, on average £14,500 per pharmacy in Wolverhampton, will be imposed next year.

These cuts will have a direct negative impact on the Council's strategic priorities related to Public Health as well as the possible closure of local pharmacies across the city, leading to a reduction in accessible healthcare for vulnerable communities, and increased pressure on other parts of the health and social care systems.

We therefore call on the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board to write to our local MPs raising these concerns and asking them to lobby government to highlight the local impact of this national policy.

Councillor Phil Simkins seconded the motion and outlined the importance of supporting community pharmacies and highlighted the impact of a closure of a pharmacy in his ward.

Councillor Wendy Thompson outlined the rationale why government were making changes to funding for community pharmacies and emphasised that instead funding would be transferred into the NHS to fund vital services. She requested that Health Scrutiny consider the item in detail.

Councillor Phil Bateman urged Councillors to support the motion and support the pharmacy businesses in Wolverhampton.

Upon being put to the meeting, and a division having been demanded and taken voting thereon was as follows:

For

Councillors

Bagri	Banger	M Bateman
P Bateman	Bedi	Bilson
Bolshaw	Brackenridge	Claymore
Collingswood	Darke	S Evans
V Evans	Gakhal	Gibson
Gwinnett	Hardacre	Hodgkiss
Inston	M Jaspal	Johnson
Kaur	Koussoukama	Lawrence
Malcolm	Miles	Moran
Muston	O'Neill	Page
Potter	Reynolds	John Rowley
Judith Rowley	Russell	Samuels
Siarkiewicz	Simkins	M Singh
T Singh	Sweet	Sweetman
Warren		

Against

Mayor
Councillors

Haynes
Photay
Thompson

Mills
P Singh
Findlay

Patten
U Singh

Resolved:

That motion on local impact of national cuts to community pharmacies be agreed.

City of Sanctuary

The Leader moved the following motion:

Wolverhampton has a proud history of welcoming diverse communities, particularly those suffering from war and persecution.

As the refugee crisis continues this city will accept and welcome our share of people in need.

To promote the inclusion and welfare of those coming to the city we resolve

- To join the growing network of cities across the country by designating Wolverhampton as a City of Sanctuary
- To support local people in welcoming and helping new communities to integrate into local and civic society
- To promote the positive contribution migrants make to the social, cultural and community life of Wolverhampton
- To work with regional and national partners to prove a safe home for unaccompanied asylum seeking children

Councillor Ian Claymore seconded the motion.

Councillor Wendy Thompson stated the city was already a city of sanctuary. She highlighted that the city was welcoming and had welcomed a large number of immigrants over the last couple of years and that priority should be given to families and children.

Councillor Roger Lawrence requested that the council make an overt commitment to this resolution.

Resolved:

That the motion on City of Sanctuary be agreed.

Questions to Cabinet Members

Councillor Paul Singh asked the following question:

Could the Cabinet Member inform Council of the revenue to the authority from bus lane enforcement fines in Wolverhampton during the last two financial years?

Councillor Steve Evans responded that the Council had received £1.1 million in 2015/16 from the payment of fines and to date had received £1.3 million for 2016/17.

Councillor Paul Singh asked a supplementary question:

Could the Cabinet Member confirm whether any health & safety, road maintenance schemes had been funded from the revenue collected?

Councillor Steve Evans confirmed that for the years 2015/16 and 2016/17 the income generated through the enforcement of bus lanes was £1.1 million and £1.3 million respectively. Costs associated with the provision of the bus lane enforcement service were £350,000. Section 55 of the road Traffic Act stipulates that Penalty Charge Notice income should pay for the enforcement service and any surplus must be used for transportation projects and improvements. A number of projects and improvement schemes had been funded from the revenue received.

Councillor Udey Singh asked the following question:

Could the Cabinet Member inform Council of the percentage take-up of childhood vaccinations offered universally through the NHS by children in Wolverhampton during the last two completed financial years, and an indication of the likely take-up so far exhibited in this financial year?

Councillor Paul Sweet put on record the importance of childhood vaccinations across the world in the prevention of death. The following breakdown was provided on Childhood immunisation uptake data for Wolverhampton (as at September 2016):

Childhood Immunisation Uptake		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 Quarter One
Reaching 1st Birthday	DTaP/IPV/Hib	91.6%	92.3%	90.9%
	PCV	91.1%	92.0%	91.2%
Reaching 2 nd Birthday	Hib/MenC Booster	90.1%	91.1%	90.5%
	PCV Booster	90.5%	91.3%	91.3%
	MMR 1	90.4%	91.5%	91.0%
Reaching 5 th Birthday	DTaP/IPV Booster	86.4%	87.3%	84.9%
	MMR 2	86.6%	87.1%	80.2%
	Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)	92.5% (dose 1)		
All 2 year olds (combined)	Seasonal Flu vaccine uptake	34.9%	30.7%	
All 3 year olds (combined)		39.7%	35.2%	
All 4 year olds (combined)		30.6%	26.1%	
Children in school years 1 age (aged 5 rising to 6 years)			58.2%	
Children in school years 2 age (aged 6 rising to 7 years)			56.4%	

Councillor Udey Singh asked a supplementary question:

Can the Cabinet Member advise how the uptake of childhood vaccinations would be kept consistent and stable?

Councillor Paul Sweet responded that regular reports were received by Public Health, however one of the challenges faced was that access to information was not readily available. A regular city-wide meeting took place with stakeholders to ensure there was timely access to GP surgeries who were not performing as highly. Councillor Paul Sweet was happy to provide further information on challenging GP surgeries.