

Meeting of the Council

Minutes - 19 July 2017

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Elias Mattu (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Phil Page (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Ian Angus
Cllr Harbans Bagri
Cllr Harman Banger
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Payal Bedi-Chadha
Cllr Peter Bilson
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
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 Welcome Koussoukama
Cllr Roger Lawrence
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Louise Miles
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Anwen Muston

Cllr Peter O'Neill
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Barry Findlay
Cllr Christopher Haynes
Cllr Christine Mills
Cllr Patricia Patten

Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Andrew Wynne

UKIP

Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett

Employees

Tim Johnson
Kevin O'Keefe
Mark Taylor
Claire Nye
Linda Sanders
Tim Johnson
Jaswinder Kaur
Ian Fegan
Shaun Aldis
David Baker
Jonathan Herrick

Deputy Managing Director
Director of Governance
Director
Director of Finance
Strategic Director - People
Strategic Director - Place
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Communications
Director of Operations Wolverhampton Homes
West Midlands Fire Service
West Midlands Fire Service

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. *Title*

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ian Brookfield, Paula Brookfield, Rupinderjit Kaur, Hazel Malcolm, Zee Russell, Mak Singh and Udey Singh.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

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

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 17 May 2017, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

1. Terror Attacks

The Mayor condemned the recent terror attacks which had taken place in Manchester and London. He added that the Council must continue to stand united against those who sought to divide us. He had sent a letter to his counterparts in Manchester and London.

2. Grenfell Tower

The Mayor was saddened by the loss of life at Grenfell Tower. He had sent a letter to his counterpart in London offering the Council's condolences.

The Council stood in silent tribute to remember the victims of the many terror attacks and Grenfell Tower.

3. The Queen's Birthday Honours

The Mayor was delighted that Keith Bradshaw DL – former High Sheriff of West Midlands (2016 – 2017) was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honour's. He was awarded an OBE for Services to Charity and Young People. The Mayor had written to Keith on behalf of the Council to extend our sincere congratulations.

4. Queen's Awards

The Mayor was delighted that the dedication of dozens of volunteers in Wolverhampton had been recognised after seven organisations they represented received the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

Awards were given to Access to Business, Ashmore Park Community Association, Bilston Town Community Football Club, Hope Community Project, Interfaith Wolverhampton, Jai Jashn Dance and The Haven Wolverhampton.

5. Vice Lord-lieutenant and New Deputy Lieutenants Appointed for the West Midlands

The Mayor reported that the Queen had appointed Beverly Lindsay OBE, OD as Her Majesty's Vice Lord-Lieutenant for the West Midlands on 12 July 2017. Beverley was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of the West Midlands in November 2013.

The Mayor added that nine new Deputy Lieutenants had also been appointed by The Lord-Lieutenant of the West Midlands, Mr John Crabtree OBE.

The Mayor had written to the Vice Lord-Lieutenant on behalf of the Council to extend our sincere congratulations.

6. City Council Award Winners

The Mayor congratulated everyone on the success at the MJ Awards, where the Council was declared Local Authority of the Year. The Council also won Most Improved Council, Senior Leadership Team of the Year and Excellence in Governance & Scrutiny.

Star Awards

The Mayor congratulated all the award winners of the Star Awards. The Star Awards recognised employees' successes and achievements and rewarded those who go the 'extra mile' to serve the City of Wolverhampton.

School Security Award

The Mayor congratulated the Council's eServices Team who had won the prize for 'School Security' at the Education Business Awards following their work with the West Midlands Police to reduce the number of break-ins across schools in the city.

7. VJ Day 2017

Councillors were advised that the Central Branch of the City of Wolverhampton Royal British Legion and the Ex-Service Council would hold a service of remembrance at the Cenotaph, St Peter's Square, on Tuesday 15 August starting at 11:30am.

8. Civic Events

The Mayor thanked all those who were able to attend the following important occasions in the civic calendar:

- Civic Sunday on 21 May and,
- Armed Forces Day

5 **Capital Budget Outturn 2016/17 including Quarter 1 Monitoring 2017/18**

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the report on Capital budget outturn 2016/17 including quarter one capital budget monitoring 2017/18. He outlined the outturn position for 2016/17 and provided an update on the 2017/18 financial performance of the General Fund and HRA capital programmes and the revised forecast for 2017/18 to 2021/22 as at quarter one of 2017/18.

In response to a question from Councillor Wendy Thompson on the increased cost of the market move, Councillor Andrew Johnson agreed to provide a detailed briefing and advised that negotiations would take place on the value of the contract and it was anticipated the price would be reduced.

Resolved:

1. That the revised medium term General Fund capital programme of £329.6 million, an increase of £13.5 million from the previously approved programme, reflecting the latest projected expenditure for the medium term be approved.
2. That the revised medium term Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme of £261.7 million, a decrease of £1.9 million from the previously approved programme, reflecting the latest projected expenditure for the medium term be approved.
3. That additional General Fund resources of £13.5 million be approved for;
 - i. CCTV - Grant to Wolverhampton Homes, a new project, of £20,000;
 - ii. Penn Kids, a new project of £325,000;
 - iii. sixteen new projects totalling £11.8 million;
 - iv. sixty-six existing projects net reduction totalling £518,000;
 - v. Southside – Market Relocation, an existing project, of £1.9 million.
4. That a grant of £20,000 be awarded to Wolverhampton Homes to procure and install CCTV equipment on the Glentworth Gardens estate.
5. That receipt of a £325,000 grant awarded by Department of Education for Penn Kids to increase capacity in order to deliver 30 hours free childcare be approved.
6. That the full grant awarded to the Council of £325,000 be transferred to the third-party provider Penn Kids.
7. That it be noted, that the capital budget requirements of the ‘Southside – Market Relocation’ project was included within the report, however the capital budget required to instruct a contractor to commence the market relocation project would not be released until a further paper was considered by Cabinet (Resources) Panel.

6 **EU Funded Projects - Payment of Grants to Delivery Partners**

Councillor John Reynolds presented the report on EU Funded Projects - Payment of Grants to Delivery Partners. He advised that report sought approval for a programme of reimbursement to pay grants to named Delivery Partners in reimbursement of costs associated with the delivery of European Union (EU) and BEIS (Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) funded projects. He added that programmes had previously been approved by Cabinet.

Councillor John Reynolds proposed the recommendations and Councillor Roger Lawrence seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That a programme of reimbursement to pay grants to named Delivery Partners in reimbursement of costs associated with the delivery of European Union and Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funded projects, in accordance with our Lead Authority role be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Director of Finance to use grant resources to reimburse delivery partner for all EU funded bids in line with their detailed project plans and financial profile to reimburse named delivery partners in line with Grant Agreements. The amounts could vary between years and partners.

7 **Wolverhampton Youth Justice Plan 2017/18**

Councillor Val Gibson presented the report on Wolverhampton Youth Justice Plan 2017/18. She outlined the plan related to the work of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) partnership under the oversight of the YOT Management Board and the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership. The plan was required to be officially submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 31 July 2017.

Councillor Val Gibson provided an overview of the plan and drew Council's attention to the three key priority areas identified within the plan which were addressing and responding to Gang and Youth Violence, achieving the Engagement in Education Training and Employment 80% engagement target, reducing the use of Youth Detention Accommodation and accessing remand placements in the community with Children Services.

Councillor Val Gibson proposed the recommendations and Councillor Lynne Moran seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

That the adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2017/18 be approved.

8 **Community Governance Review**

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the report on Community Governance Review. He reported that the Council had received a formal request for a community

governance review, specifically in relation to Tettenhall Wightwick and Tettenhall Regis, for which the Council agreed to undertake a community governance review.

Councillor Andrew Johnson provided an overview of the consultation process and key findings from the consultation were highlighted. Due to the equivocal outcome of the consultation undertaken by the Council, advice was sought from James Goudie QC. It was noted, he approved the draft report and did not suggest any amendments to the proposed recommendations.

Councillor Andrew Johnson proposed the recommendations and Councillor Steve Simkins seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That a parish council not be implemented for the wards of Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick, based on the outcomes of the community governance review.
2. That it be noted, the outcomes of the citywide community governance review, together with proposed recommendations for Council to consider, would be reported to the Special Advisory Group in September 2017.

9 **Fire Safety Management; High Rise Tower Blocks**

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the report on Fire Safety Management; High Rise Tower Blocks. He highlighted that the report provided a comprehensive update on the actions taken by the Council as a result of the dreadful fire which had taken place at Grenfell Tower. He went on to assure Councillors that none of the Tower blocks within Wolverhampton had ACM cladding.

Councillor Peter Bilson added the Council was one of the first to publish safety findings and would continue to monitor the situation and work closely with partners to ensure required was undertaken and residents were also kept informed. A separate briefing note had been prepared on implications for non-residential dwellings and this would also be circulated to all Councillors. The situation would be monitored closely and updates would be provided to the relevant committee.

Councillor Peter Bilson commended the work undertaken by West Midlands Fire Service and Wolverhampton Homes.

Councillor Peter Bilson proposed the recommendations and Councillor Greg Brackenridge seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

That the actions taken by the Council following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, London on the 13th June 2017 be noted.

10 **West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Review and Annual Plan**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Roger Lawrence presented the report on the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Review and Annual Plan. He went on to

outline strategic objectives contained within the plan which would facilitate the development of the region.

Councillor Roger Lawrence added the WMCA had come far in a short space of time and would now move forward with the legitimately elected mayor. He highlighted that the Council had an instrumental role in developing key policy areas for the WMCA and would continue to have a key role going forward. The WMCA was currently negotiating a further devolution deal with government.

The Leader, Councillor Roger Lawrence proposed the recommendations and Councillor Peter Bilson seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

That the West Midlands Combined Authority Review and Annual Plan 2017/18 be noted.

11 **Motion on Notice**

Councillor Val Gibson moved the following motion:

The Wolverhampton Youth Council had asked the City of Wolverhampton Council to support their campaign for votes for 16 year olds. The Youth Council was a democratically elected body which represented the views of young people to decision makers in the City.

This Council had a duty to have due regard to the views of all our residents including the young people of our City.

This Council therefore resolves to support the Wolverhampton Youth Council and national Youth Parliament campaign for votes at 16 by agreeing -

- (i) a policy of supporting votes from 16 years of age, and;
- (ii) to petition the Government to bring forward legislation to enable this."

Councillor Daniel Warren seconded the motion.

Resolved:

That the motion on votes at 16 be agreed.

12 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Councillor Paul Singh asked the Cabinet Member for City Economy the following question:

"Can the Cabinet Member advise Council on the number of empty business properties in the City of Wolverhampton?"

Councillor John Reynolds responded that the Council's database currently showed 444 empty office, industrial, retail, leisure other properties. This covered what was currently being marketed and was dependant on agents uploading details onto the

system. It included those where there was a vacant owner or were dilapidated, unless they were being marketed.

There were many reasons for properties being vacant at any one time. This included planned vacancies during major refurbishment or as part of the acquisition and assembly process that precedes major physical regeneration schemes.

Councillor Paul Singh thanked Councillor John Reynolds for his response and asked the following supplementary question:

Can the Cabinet Member for City Economy advise if a property has not been secured by a landlord whether the Fire Service have needed to exercise section 21 of the Order.

Councillor John Reynolds responded that he would liaise with West Midlands Fire Service and provide the information to Councillor Paul Singh.