

Meeting of the Council

Minutes - 8 November 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 Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Ian Claymore
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Claire Darke

Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Evans
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
Councillor Louise Miles

Cllr Hazel Malcolm
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 Mak Singh
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Barry Findlay
Cllr Christine Mills
Cllr Patricia Patten
Cllr Paul Singh

Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Andrew Wynne
Cllr Jonathan Yardley

UKIP

Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett

Employees

Keith Ireland
Kevin O'Keefe
Claire Nye
Tim Johnson
Mark Taylor
Emma Bennett
David Watts
Meredith Teasdale
Laura Phillips
Colin Parr
Jaswinder Kaur

Managing Director
Director of Governance
Director of Finance
Deputy Managing Director/Strategic Director - Place
Strategic Director - People
Director of Children's Services
Director of Adults Services
Director of Education
Head of Business Management
Head of Governance
Democratic Services Manager

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. Title

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bhupinder Gakhal, Chris Haynes, Arun Photay, Sandra Samuels OBE and Steve Simkins.

2 Declarations of interest

The following Councillors declared the interests detailed below in respect of agenda item 8, second motion on financial package.

Councillor	Interest	Reason
Harman Banger	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Business owner on the Bilston Road.
Roger Lawrence	Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	Member of the West Midlands Combined Authority.
Andrew Wynn	Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	A business on the Bilston Road maybe a possible client of law firm.

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 20 September 2017, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

1. Wolves in Wolves Auction

The Mayor was delighted to report the success of the Wolves in Wolves auction at the Molineux last week. Following the success of the Wolves in Wolves public art exhibition, which had seen thousands of people walking the city streets to view our colourful Wolves, the auction had raised over £35,000. The monies would be split between the Outside Centre charity, which provides support to those with disabilities, and the Mayor's charity fund.

2. Diversity Celebration

The Mayor was delighted to attend the Schools' Diversity Celebration at the newly-reopened Civic Hall last week. Now in its 30th year, the performance included hundreds of pupils from schools across the city. The celebration was entitled *One World, One People, One Voice* and showcased the range of cultures, languages, traditions and faiths found here in our City.

3. Orange Wolverhampton

The Mayor's reported City of Wolverhampton Council was once again supporting the United Nations' annual 16-day campaign to "Orange the World" and end gender-based violence.

The Mayor requested all Councillors to do their bit to help us Orange Wolverhampton, and raise awareness of the issue of violence against women and girls and the help and support which was available to victims locally.

The Mayor added there were many ways Councillors could get involved in the campaign, which runs from 25 November to 10 December, from wearing an orange ribbon and sharing key messages with people they meet, to holding orange-themed events and activities. If Councillors were on social media, they were requested to share posts using the hashtag #orangewolves.

4. New appointment

The Mayor welcomed the new Director for Public Health, John Denley, who started in post at the beginning of the month. He also expressed the Council's appreciation to Susan Milner, who had covered the role over the past few months on an interim basis.

The Mayor also welcomed the new Director for Education, Meredith Teasdale.

5. Remembrance Events

The Mayor reported he would be attending the following Services of Remembrance this weekend:

Dutch War Graves

The City would commemorate the Dutch soldiers who were part of the Prinses Irene Brigade stationed at Wrottesley Park during the Second World War at the annual Dutch War Graves Service of Remembrance at Merridale Cemetery on Jeffcock Road. The service would take place on Saturday 11 November, 2017, which begins with a short parade forming up at 9.40am.

Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor reminded colleagues that the City of Wolverhampton Remembrance Service would be held on Sunday, 12 November 2017. The Outdoor Drumhead Service would begin at 10.56am, followed by a second service in St. Peter's Church at approximately 11.30am. Councillors' robes would be available from the Art Gallery from 10.00am.

6. Carols in the City

The Mayor invited Councillors to the new-look annual civic carol service. Carols in the City would take place on Wednesday 6 December in the Mander Centre and would begin at 6pm. This would include appearances by:

- The Wolverhampton Brass Band.
- Local gospel choir, Palmers and Friends.
- Students from Hill Avenue Primary School and Northwood Park Primary.
- The City of Wolverhampton Council Choir.

5 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Scheme

Councillor Steve Evans presented the electric vehicle infrastructure scheme report. He sought approval for the receipt of a grant from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and for that grant to be transferred to a private delivery partner in

due course. He added that 24 charging points would be installed across the City, the locations of the charging point were still to be determined. It was envisaged the first charging point would be installed by May 2018. He went on to add that infrastructure and higher uptake of electric vehicles would have a positive impact on the environment and contribute to a clearer air zone for Wolverhampton.

Councillor Steve Evans proposed the recommendations and Councillor John Reynolds seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the receipt of a grant for £478,000 awarded by the Office for Ultra Low Emissions to the Council to install 24 electric vehicle charge points in the City be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Environment, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to transfer the full grant to the preferred private partner, once identified.
3. That the approved Capital Programme budget for Smart and Accessible City against which this programme was assigned was reduced to £478,000 to reflect the grant allocation.

6 Digital Transformation Programme 2017-20

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the Digital Transformation Programme 2017-20 report. He sought approval for Phase 2 of the delivery of the Council's Digital Transformation Programme. He added the Council had made wonderful progress with phase 1 and that this was evidenced as the Council had won an MJ Award for the services provided by the Council to customers. He went on to provide an overview of the programmes to be delivered as part of phase 2 and highlighted the cost savings that would be provided to the Council. He emphasised that the Council had opted for digital by choice.

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

Resolved:

1. That the implementation of future phases of the Digital Transformation Programme over the period 2017-18 to 2019-20 be approved.
2. That the allocation of projected capital resources totalling £3.0 million for the delivery of the next phase, Phase 2, of the City of Wolverhampton Council's Digital Transformation Programme over the period 2017-18 be approved.
3. That the allocation of additional capital resources totalling £1.0 million for the further rollout of the ICT capital programme during 2017-18 be approved.

7 Executive Business

The Council received a summary of executive business relating to the private sector housing assistance policy.

Resolved:

1. That the summary of executive business be received.

8 **Motions on Notice**

Councillor Lynne Moran moved the following motion:

The City of Wolverhampton Council notes its concern at the roll out of Universal Credit without the resolution of the delayed payments issue. Experience elsewhere in the country suggests that delays of 6-7 weeks or more to people claiming benefits had put many into debt, led to increasing arrears in council rent and increased risk of private tenants being subject to eviction proceedings.

Despite widespread calls for this to be addressed before the national implementation of the scheme, including from within the Conservative Party, the Government seems intent on proceeding.

This council resolves to ask the Minister to delay implementation, even at this late stage, to prevent serious harm to some of the poorest people in Wolverhampton.

Councillor Lynne Moran outlined the rationale for the motion. Councillor John Reynolds seconded the motion.

The motion was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the motion on universal credit be agreed.

Having declared an interest Councillor Harman Banger, Councillor Roger Lawrence and Councillor Andrew Wynn left the meeting room and took no part in the consideration of the second motion on financial package.

Councillor Udey Singh moved the following motion:

For the City of Wolverhampton Council to provide a suitable compensatory financial package/ assistance to those businesses that have been severely impacted by the tram line repairs.

Councillor Udey Singh outlined the rationale for the motion. Councillor Paul Singh seconded the motion.

Councillor Andrew Johnson moved the following amendment to the motion:

This Council is very concerned about the difficulties facing small businesses affected by metro works on Bilston Road. This Council requests the Metro Mayor and Combined Authority to re-visit the decision not to provide hardship

assistance to small businesses which can demonstrate the impact of the works on their trade.

Councillor Andrew Johnson outlined the rationale for the proposed amendment. Councillor John Reynolds seconded the motion.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the amended motion on financial package be agreed.

9 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Councillor Udey Singh asked the Cabinet Member for City Environment the following question:

Does the cabinet member agree that it is time to review the bus lane restrictions that were currently in place?

Councillor Steve Evans responded that the restrictions were regularly reviewed and as part of the process professional advice was sought and traffic flow was monitored on a daily basis. The Council had made some recent changes in relation to middle cross.

Councillor Udey Singh thanked Councillor Steve Evans for his response and then asked the following supplementary question

Can the Cabinet Member for City Environment advice why he was not acting on the advice of his fellow Cabinet Member for City Economy and a property director to bring more people into the city by reviewing restrictions.

Councillor Steve Evans responded that the Council needed to ensure the approach adopted by the Council was fair for all commuters and not just drivers. Of the 450 miles of roads, less than 3 miles was used for bus lanes. He re-emphasised that the Council had recently reviewed the bus lanes and had made changes following the review. He added that emergency services also benefitted from the bus lanes as emergency vehicles were able to bypass traffic.

Councillor Paul Singh asked the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing the following question:

Can the Cabinet Member please advise Council of the percentage of children in the City of Wolverhampton who are classed as obese or overweight?

Councillor Paul Sweet responded that National Child Measurement Programme captured data on overweight and obese children. In Wolverhampton 14.3 % of reception children were classified as overweight and 13.5% as obese. For Year 6 children 16.5% were classified overweight and 26.7% as obese.

Councillor Paul Singh thanked Councillor Paul Sweet for his response and then asked the following supplementary question.

Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing confirm the take-up rate for a support programme which provides assistance to tackle obesity.

The Cabinet Member responded that he was unable to provide specific data in relation to that programme at the meeting however he would ensure it was provided to all Councillors following the meeting. He highlighted that several strategies such as 'Towards an Active City', 'Beat the Streets', 'West Midlands on the Move' with the West Midlands Combined Authority and a review of planning policies relating to licensing fast food outlets had been adopted by the Council to ensure there was a whole system approach to tackling obesity.