



Meeting of the Council

Minutes – 5 February 2014

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Milkinder Jaspal (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Michael Heap (Lib Dem)

Labour

Cllr Ian Angus
Cllr Harbans Bagri
Cllr Harman Banger
Cllr Phil Bateman
Cllr Payal Bedi
Cllr Peter Bilson
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Ian Claymore
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Susan Constable
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Bishan Dass

Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Steven Evans
Cllr Valerie Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Valerie Gibson
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Andrew Johnson
Cllr Roger Lawrence
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Elias Mattu
Cllr Lorna McGregor

Cllr Peter O'Neill
Cllr Philip Page
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Zahid Shah
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Thomas Turner
Cllr Martin Waite

Conservative

Cllr Mark Evans
Cllr Barry Findlay
Cllr Christopher Haynes
Cllr Christine Mills
Cllr Neville Patten

Cllr Patricia Patten
Cllr Arun Photay
Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Andrew Wynne
Cllr Jonathan Yardley

Liberal Democrat

Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett
Cllr Richard Whitehouse

Employees

Keith Ireland
Tim Johnson
Sarah Norman
Martyn Sargeant
Mark Taylor
John Wright

Strategic Director Delivery
Strategic Director Education and Environment
Strategic Director Community
Head of Democratic Services
Assistant Director - Finance
Democratic Support Manager

The proceedings opened with prayers

Item Title
No.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Matthew Holdcroft.

2. Declarations of Interests

The following Councillors declared the interests set out below in Agenda Item 5 - Housing Revenue Account:

Cllr Ian Claymore	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Council tenant
Cllr Constable	(a) Disclosable pecuniary interest (b) Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	(a) Council tenant (b) Member of the board of Wolverhampton Homes
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Member of the board of Wolverhampton Homes
Cllr Leach	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Leaseholder
Cllr Lorna McGregor	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Leaseholder
Cllr Peter O'Neill	Disclosable pecuniary interest	Council tenant
Cllr Rita Potter	Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	Member of the board of Wolverhampton Homes
Cllr Paul Singh	Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	Member of the board of Wolverhampton Homes
Cllr Tersaim Singh	Disclosable non-pecuniary interest	Member of the board of Wolverhampton Homes

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (18 December 2013)

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 December 2013 be approved as a correct record

4. Mayor's Communications:

The Late Bert Williams and the Late Steve Evans

The Mayor referred to the recent deaths of Bert Williams and Steve Evans and asked the meeting to stand for a minute's silence in their memory.

The Queen's New Year's Honours

The Mayor referred to a number of people from Wolverhampton or with links to the City

who received recognition in the Queen's New Year's Honours including Dr Sadhu Singh Gakhal, Sylvia Harris, Jacqueline Brookes and former Chief Superintendent Neil Evans. The Mayor had written to all recipients expressing the Council's congratulations on their richly-deserved awards.

The Mayor invited Cllr Claymore to speak in respect of Sylvia Simpson.

DECISION ITEMS

5. Petition – “Against The Proposal To Curtail The Teaching Of Mother Tongue Classes”

Mr Devsi presented a petition against the proposal to curtail the teaching of mother tongue classes.

Cllr Mattu, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities responded to the petition

It was moved by Cllr Mattu, seconded by Cllr Page and

Resolved:

1. That the terms of the petition be noted.
2. That the saving proposal to reduce the Council subsidy to the teaching of Community Languages over a period of time was approved as part of the 2013/14 budget process and was not included in the 2014/15 budget consultation.
3. That the Cabinet receive a further report to look at how voluntary and faith groups could be encouraged to support the teaching of Mother tongue languages.

6. Petition – ‘Save Central Baths’

Ms Bailey presented a petition which called for the retention of Central Baths

Cllr Mattu, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities responded to the petition. He indicated a range of work that was underway to try to keep the baths open. He indicated that a report would be submitted to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 11 March.

It was moved by Cllr Mattu, seconded by Cllr Collingswood and

Resolved:

That a report on the future of Central Baths be submitted to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 11 March.

7 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (Including 2014/15 Budget, Rents and Service Charges)

It was moved by Cllr Bilson, seconded by Cllr Johnson and

Resolved:

1. That the business plan, set out at appendix A of the Cabinet report, be approved as the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan, including:
 - (i) The revenue budget for 2014/15;
 - (ii) The capital programme for 2013/14 to 2017/18.

2. That the rents for HRA dwellings be increased by an average of 6.23%, in accordance with the Government's rent restructuring formula (including its constraints on individual rent increases), with effect from 7 April 2014.
3. That the rents for HRA garages be increased by 6.23%, with effect from 7 April 2014.
4. That HRA service charges and district heating charges be set at the levels detailed in appendix B3 of the Cabinet report, with effect from 7 April 2014.
5. That Hostel and Carelink rents and charges be set at the levels detailed in appendix B4 of the Cabinet report, with effect from 1 April 2014.
6. That the charges to be levied on tenants and leaseholders by Wolverhampton Homes set out in appendix B5 of the Cabinet report be noted.
7. The Council places on record its sincere thanks to all those tenants' representatives and other stakeholders and partners who put forward views and comments during the consultation process.

8 **Amendments to the Constitution**

It was moved by Cllr Turner , seconded by Cllr Wynne and

Resolved:

That the revisions to the Constitution, detailed in the report submitted, be approved.

9 **Summary of Executive Business – 24 November 2013 to 23 January 2014**

Councillor Simkins asked Councillor Reynolds, as Cabinet Member for City Services what action had been taken in the city to promote Fairtrade products over the previous ten years. Councillor Reynolds detailed the action that had been taken.

10 **Questions**

The following questions, which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's procedure rules, were asked by Cllr Findlay:

Question 1

"Could the Portfolio Holder for City Services tell Council how many residents bins did not get collected after Christmas for failing the Council's policy of putting the wrong type of Christmas paper (shiny) in their recycling?"

Cllr Reynolds, as Cabinet Member for City Services, detailed the percentage of bins for the previous five months which had not been collected. He was unable to give a percentage relating specifically to shiny paper but stated that it had not been collected, as recyclable material since 2010.

Cllr Findlay asked a supplemental question about the value of leaflets which had been circulated. Cllr Reynolds stated that the leaflets had not caused confusion and shiny wrapping papers were not accepted at paper mills and had to be sent to landfill

Question 2

"At a time when the Council is making cuts to vital services does he really think this is the

time and best use of taxpayers money to recruit Bin Buddies?”

Cllr Reynolds, as Cabinet Member for City Services, responded to the question and stated that the funding had come from central government for a specific purpose and funded services which would not have been otherwise provided

Question 3

“Could the Leader of the Council tell Council what arrangements have been put in place by the City Council to commemorate the starting of World War 1 100 years ago this August?”

Cllr Lawrence responded and detailed a range of events that were planned across the City. He stated that full; details of the list of events would be circulated to all Councillors once it had been finalised.

Question 4

“Children from similar backgrounds and abilities can end up with different prospects just because of which school they attend. Fewer pupils in Wolverhampton attend a good or outstanding school than any other area in the country. Does he think this is good enough?”

Cllr Page, Cabinet Member for Schools Skills and Learning responded and detailed the recently announced examination results.

Cllr Findlay asked, as a supplementary question, whether the Council would work more closely with schools to monitor performance.

Cllr Page responded and explained the Council’s role in school improvement.