

Meeting of the Council

Minutes - 4 November 2015

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Ian Brookfield (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Barry Findlay (Con)

Labour

Cllr Ian Angus
Cllr Harbans Bagri
Cllr Harman Banger
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman
Cllr Payal Bedi
Cllr Peter Bilson
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Ian Claymore
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Bishan Dass
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar

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 Elias Mattu
Cllr Lorna McGregor

Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Peter O'Neill
Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Mark Evans
Cllr Christine Mills
Cllr Patricia Patten
Cllr Arun Photay

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

Liberal Democrat

Cllr Richard Whitehouse

UKIP

Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett

Employees

Tracey Christie
Ian Fegan
Adam Hadley
Keith Ireland
Tim Johnson
Julien Kramer
Kevin O'Keefe
Laura Phillips
Linda Sanders
Martyn Sargeant

Head of Legal
Head of Communications
Group Manager - Democracy
Managing Director
Strategic Director - Place
Director of Education
Director of Governance
Business Support Manager
Strategic Director - People
Group Manager - Corporate Administration

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. *Title*

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Haynes and Kaur.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

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

That subject to the resolution in item 8 being amended to read Councillor Reynolds proposing the recommendation and the resolution in item 9 being amended to read Councillor Reynolds seconding the recommendation, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 September 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

The Late Councillor Bert Turner

The Mayor made reference to the death of Councillor Bert Turner on 6 October 2015 and extended the deepest sympathies of the Council to his wife and family. Councillor Simkins then paid tribute to Councillor Turner.

Those present stood in silent tribute to Councillor Burt Turner.

Dutch War Graves Remembrance Service

The Mayor invited councillors to attend the annual Service of Remembrance for Dutch soldiers from the Princess Irene Brigade, buried at Jeffcock Road Cemetery which was taking place on 7 November 2015 at 9.40am.

Festival of Remembrance

The Mayor made reference to the Festival of Remembrance which had taken place on 1 November 2015 and gave thanks to Councillor Leach for organising the event.

Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor informed councillors of the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday service which was taking place on 8 November 2015.

Civic Carol Service

The Mayor invited councillors to the Civic Carol Service which was taking place on 6 December 2015 at 3.30pm at Darlington Street Methodist Church.

5 Petition 148-15 Save Elderly Care in Wolverhampton

The Council had received a petition which contained 5,637 signatures from residents of the City. The petition opposed the recommendations made in the Cabinet report of 22 July 2015, Better Care technology and strengthening support at home.

The Mayor outlined the procedure for considering the petition.

The lead petitioner, Adrian Turner, addressed Council in support of the petition.

Councillor Mattu, Cabinet Member for Adults, responded to the petition.

It was proposed by Councillor Mattu and seconded by Councillor Lawrence to consider the points made in the petition and include them as part of the consultation that was going to be considered by the Cabinet on 11 November 2015.

The issues raised in the petition were debated.

In line with the Constitution, at the conclusion of the debate the lead petitioner asked three further questions to the Cabinet Member, to which he responded.

The Mayor thanked all those who attended the meeting to hear the debate on the petition.

Resolved:

- (1) That the petition be received.
- (2) To consider the points made in the petition and include them as part of the consultation that is going to be considered by the Cabinet on 11 November 2015.

6 Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Councillor Sweet outlined how the report followed on from the previous review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. The report had been considered by the Special Advisory Group on 20 October 2015 and the outcome of the further work with ward councillors for Penn and Tettenhall Regis had been included in the report.

Council placed on record its thanks to the officers who had undertaken the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

It was proposed by Councillor Sweet, seconded by Councillor Johnson, and resolved:

- That the polling stations to be employed for the 2016 City Council and Police and Crime Commissioner elections be approved.

7 **Special Appointments Committee**

Councillor Lawrence proposed, Councillor Bilson seconded and it was resolved:

- (1) That a Special Appointments Committee for the purpose of appointing to the position of Service Director – City Environment be established.
- (2) That the following membership be appointed to the Special Appointments Committee with the option of nominating substitute councillors if required:

Councillor Steve Evans (Labour)
Councillor Johnson (Labour)
Councillor Lawrence (Labour)
Councillor Paul Singh (Conservative)
Councillor Sweet (Labour)
Councillor Sweetman (Labour)
Councillor Thompson (Conservative)

8 **Executive Business**

Council received a summary of executive business in relation to the Wolverhampton Youth Justice Plan.

9 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Business Week and Small Business Saturday

Councillor Wendy Thompson asked the following question:

Can the Leader of the Council indicate how the authority intends to mark Small Business Saturday on 5th December 2015, this being an excellent opportunity for all public institutions to celebrate the role of small businesses in our local economies, and also to set out the outcomes so far from the recent Business Week held in the city in terms of the extra inward investment that has been secured as a direct result of the preparatory work done to organise that week of events?

Councillor Lawrence confirmed that the Council was working with local partners to promote Small Business Saturday. These partners included the Black Country Growth Hub, Access to Business, business organisations, the Wolverhampton Business Improvement District and individual businesses. A key event would be the Celebrating Enterprise Day at the Molineux on 2 December which would encourage more people to look at self-employment as a career option. Councillor Lawrence ensured Councillors that they would receive details events which were planned.

Councillor Lawrence also outlined the commitment to working with businesses throughout the year.

Councillor Thompson outlined that she was pleased with the investment being made to the railway. She also outlined that there needed to be greater improvement in the local skills base, in particular around mathematics education in school.

Councillor Lawrence confirmed that there had been concrete investment in the City and cited Wiggle as an example where 200 new jobs had been created. Council was also informed that work would take place with businesses for customised training. In relation to school results, the Leader outlined substantial improvement made over recent years and thanked the former Director of Education, Dr James McElligott for his work at the Council.

West Midlands Combined Authority

Councillor Wendy Thompson asked the following question:

Can the Leader of the Council give an update on the position with the West Midlands Combined Authority, and progress with moving towards a bid for a Devolution Deal for the West Midlands?

Councillor Lawrence outlined that the bid for a combined authority had been submitted for parliamentary approval on behalf of the seven metropolitan boroughs, the three local enterprise partnerships and six district councils. If successful, the Combined Authority would be inaugurated in April 2016. In relation to the Devolution Deal, Council was informed that negotiations were continuing, but at the request of the Treasury, were confidential. Councillor Lawrence explained that any decisions on a devolution deal or the creation of a regional Metro Mayor would require a decision by Council.

BME Community in Teaching in Wolverhampton

Councillor Paul Singh asked the following question:

Given that the between 35% and 40% of Wolverhampton's population are from a BME background, could the Cabinet Member indicate the number of BME teachers in Wolverhampton schools and what percentage of the teaching profession in Wolverhampton this constitutes?

Councillor Darke explained that each school was responsible for their own recruitment and employment and as such the Council did not hold the information requested.

In response to a further question from Councillor Paul Singh, Councillor Darke agreed to provide him with the number of BME head teachers employed in the City.