

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Claire Darke (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Olivia Birch
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Alan Butt
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Jacqui Coogan
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Evans

Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Celia Hibbert
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal
Cllr Rashpal Kaur
Cllr Roger Lawrence
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN
Cllr Louise Miles
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Anwen Muston

Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE
Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Martin Waite

Conservative

Cllr Paul Appleby
Cllr Payal Bedi-Chadha
Cllr Simon Bennett
Cllr Jonathan Crofts
Cllr Sohail Khan

Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Jonathan Yardley

Independent

Cllr Harman Banger

Employees

Tim Johnson
David Pattison
Mark Taylor
Ross Cook
Ian Fegan
Charlotte Johns
Richard Lawrence
Claire Nye
David Watts
Laura Phillips
Jaswinder Kaur

Chief Executive
Director of Governance
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of City Environment
Director of Communications and External Relations
Director of Strategy
Director of Regeneration
Director of Finance
Director of Adult Services
Head of Democratic and Support Services
Democratic Services Manager

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. Title

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Christopher Haynes and Councillor John Rowley.

2 Declarations of interest

The following declarations of interest had been made:

Agenda item 9 – Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers

Councillor	Interest	Reason
Linda Leach	Disclosable pecuniary interest	A business owner who received a grant.
Sandra Samuels MBE	Disclosable pecuniary interest	A business owner who received a grant.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

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

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 4 March 2020, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

The Deputy Mayor announced that he would read out the Mayor’s Communications on behalf of the Mayor.

1. COVID 19

The Deputy Mayor paid tribute to all those lost to Covid-19. The Deputy Mayor extended the deepest sympathies of the Council to grieving families and friends who had lost loved ones.

The Deputy Mayor added he was proud of the entire workforce who all had a part to play in the way the Council had responded and the City, by working as one to manage the crisis and ensuring the most vulnerable residents in the City were looked after.

The Deputy Mayor encouraged all to continue to stay alert and safe while working to relight the City following the in the City’s motto ‘out of darkness cometh light’.

2. Appointment of Honorary Recorder

The Deputy Mayor was delighted to announce that His Honour Michael Chambers QC had accepted the role as Honorary Recorder. He takes over from His Honour James Burbidge QC who left the role as resident Judge on 8

April 2020 to take up a post in the City of Worcester. The Deputy Mayor added this would be an excellent opportunity to maintain and develop a strong association between the Council and the local Judiciary.

3. Queen's Honours List

The Deputy Mayor was delighted to announce that three people with connections to Wolverhampton were recognised as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours:

- Amarjit Cheema was awarded an OBE for services to Education.
- Dr Helen Macpherson Hibbs was awarded an MBE for services to NHS leadership.
- Christine McGowan from Whitmore Reans was awarded an MBE for services in Developing Arts in Wolverhampton.

The Deputy Mayor extended his sincere congratulations to Amarjeet, Helen and Christine and confirmed that the Mayor had written a letter to all three on behalf of the Council.

4. Queen's Award for the Voluntary Sector

The Deputy Mayor was delighted to announce that in June 2020 there were two worthy winners of the Queen's Award for the Voluntary Sector;

- Stratton Street Community Centre and
- The Birch Thompson (Memorial Fund) Trust

The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the Mayor had sent a letter of congratulations to both organisations on behalf of the Council.

5. Armed Forces Week 2020

The Deputy Mayor reported that Armed Forces Week began with a short private flag-raising ceremony on Monday 22 June 2020 outside the Civic Centre.

The Deputy Mayor added that throughout the week there were online virtual campaigns held in remembrance, highlighting our Armed Forces past, present and future.

6. Windrush Day

The Deputy Mayor informed Councillors that on the Monday 22 June the Mayor and Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE, raised the flag to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of the Empire Windrush, the first ship that brought people from the Caribbean to the UK to acknowledge the enormous contribution they and their descendants have made.

7. VE Day VJ Day 2020

The Deputy Mayor reported that unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic no services were held at the Cenotaph for the 75th anniversary of VE day on Friday 8 May 2020.

The Deputy Mayor informed Councillors that on Saturday 15 August 2020 the Royal British Legion held a small private service of remembrance for VJ Day at the Burma Star Memorial opposite the Cenotaph , St. Peter's Square.

The Deputy Mayor informed Councillors that individual messages for both events were sent by the Mayor on behalf of the Council which was shared online.

8. Wolverhampton Wanders

The Deputy Mayor was delighted to congratulate the Wolverhampton Wanders Football Club for reaching the quarter finals in the Europa League for the first time in almost 50 years.

5 Relighting Our City: City of Wolverhampton Council Recovery Commitment

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the Relighting Our City: City of Wolverhampton Council Recovery Commitment for approval. The report outlined the Council's commitment to continue to work with partners to support the City to live with and recover from Covid-19. He introduced a presentation titled 'Relighting Our City – Reset, Recover and Relight'.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield advised that a restorative approach was undertaken to develop the commitment by engaging with local people, businesses as well as a focussed Citizen Panel meetings.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield outlined the key themes:

- Support people who need us most
- Create more opportunities for young people
- Generate more jobs and learning opportunities
- Grow our vital local business
- Stimulate vibrant high streets and communities

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendation and Councillor Louise Miles seconded the recommendation.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the Relighting Our City: City of Wolverhampton Council's Covid-19 recovery commitment be approved.

6 **Our Climate Commitment**

Councillor Steve Evans presented the Our Climate Commitment for approval. He advised that the report was due to be considered at Council in April 2020 but had been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He outlined progress made around Climate Change since the declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019.

Councillor Steve Evans highlighted the Council had reduced its carbon footprint by 45% to date and it was envisaged it would be reduced by a further 50% in the near future.

Councillor Steve Evans added that consultation had taken place on the Our Climate Commitment document with the Citizens Assembly in February 2020, engaging with the public virtually using the hashtag #OneGreenGov and collaborating with Sustainability West Midlands to develop the final document.

Councillor Steve Evans commended Councillor Barbara McGarrity as the Climate Change Champion for raising the awareness of climate change and lead officers for their hard work.

Councillor Steve Evans proposed the recommendation and Councillor John Reynolds seconded the recommendation and commended the work undertaken by the Head of Business Service and Project Manager (Climate Change) to progress this work. He wished both well in their new roles.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the Our Climate Commitment document be approved.

7 **Safer Wolverhampton Partnership - Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2020-2023**

Councillor Jasbir Jaspal presented the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership - Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2020-2023 for approval. She advised that the strategy builds on the previous 2017-2020 strategy priorities as a result of its successful outcomes. She outlined some of the successes and challenges of the previous strategy. She advised that a place based approach would be taken to deliver the strategy.

Councillor Jasbir Jaspal outlined the strategy's overarching priorities moving forward as;

- Preventing harm
- Harm reduction
- Building community compacity
- Reducing offending

Councillor Jasbir Jaspal added that following consideration by Cabinet the strategy had been amended to strengthen the equalities implications and reinforce the links between the strategy and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

Councillor Jasbir Jaspal proposed the recommendation and Councillor Linda Leach seconded the recommendation.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That Safer Wolverhampton Partnership - Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2020-2023 be endorsed.

8 **Changes to the Constitution as a result of Covid-19 and other urgent changes**

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented the Changes to the Constitution as a result of Covid-19 and other urgent changes for approval. She outlined the five substantive amendments to be made to the constitution and the rationale for making these changes.

Councillor Paula Brookfield proposed the recommendations and Councillor Simon Bennett seconded the recommendations.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

1. That the amendments to the Constitution be approved.
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to implement the changes.

9 **Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the Decisions Made Under Urgent Action Powers report for noting. The report detailed all the decisions taken under Urgent Action Powers due to all Council meetings being cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendation and Councillor Louise Miles seconded the recommendation.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the decisions made under the Council's Urgent Action Powers be noted.

10 **Motions on Notice**

The Deputy Mayor informed Council that the second motion on Covid-19 Tribute had been withdrawn.

a. **COVID-19 Resolution**

The Leader of the Council moved the following motion:

That the City of Wolverhampton Council welcomes and is immensely grateful for the hard work and commitment of its many frontline and key workers, from health and social care staff, to refuse workers and council officers, who have and continue to maintain essential services and support during the current pandemic.

This Council also commends the response of many Wolverhampton residents who have selflessly given their time and support to their neighbours and families during this crisis.

COVID 19 in the City has taken its toll both in personal and financial losses, and we urge the Government to keep to their word and commit to extra funding to cover the funding gap caused by the pandemic. They must ensure that local councils have everything they need to overcome this crisis.

Furthermore we call on Government to trust and respect local councils and give us the powers we need to support our communities as it becomes increasingly clear that the responsibility of preventing a second wave will be through local lockdowns borne by local government.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield outlined the rationale for the motion. Councillor Wendy Thompson seconded the motion and paid tribute to all those involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The motion was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the motion on Covid-19 Resolution be agreed.

c. Reopening of libraries

Councillor Simon Bennett moved the following motion:

That without delay, the Council agrees to fully reopen the City's libraries incorporating Covid secure measures similar to the processes already established in neighbouring authorities, following a change to government guidance 4th July.

That this Council also notes the importance of libraries in providing, but not limited to, the loaning of book, audio books, large print items as well as free computer and internet access.

Councillor Simon Bennett outlined the rationale for the motion. Councillor Wendy Thompson seconded the motion.

Councillor Stephen Simkins moved the following amendment to the motion:

This council's priority is to its citizens' safety and will return the Library service to full operation on the advice of the Director of Public health. The service is constantly under review.

This Council notes the importance of libraries in providing, but not limited to, the loaning of book, audio books, large print items as well as free computer and internet access.

Councillor Stephen Simkins outlined the rationale for the proposed amendment.
Councillor John Reynolds seconded the amendment to the motion.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

Resolved:

That the following amended motion on re-opening libraries be agreed:

‘That this Council’s priority is to its citizens’ safety and will return the Library service to full operation on the advice of the Director of Public Health. The service is constantly under review. The Council notes the importance of libraries in providing, but not limited to, the loaning of book, audio books, large print items as well as free computer and internet access.’