

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber at the  
Town Hall Chapel Road Worthing on**

**15 December 2015**

The Mayor, Councillor Michael Donin  
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sean McDonald

Councillor Noel Atkins	Councillor Mary Lermite
Councillor Roy Barraclough	Councillor Heather Mercer
Councillor Keith Bickers	*Councillor Nigel Morgan
*Councillor Joan Bradley	Councillor Louise Murphy
Councillor Callum Buxton	Councillor Mark Nolan
Councillor Michael Cloake	*Councillor Luke Proudfoot
Councillor Edward Crouch	Councillor Clive Roberts
Councillor James Doyle	Councillor Bob Smytherman
Councillor Norah Fisher	Councillor Elizabeth Sparkes
Councillor Diane Guest	Councillor Keith Sunderland
Councillor Alex Harman	Councillor Bryan Turner
Councillor Lionel Harman	Councillor Val Turner
Councillor Joshua High	Councillor Vicki Vaughan
Councillor Paul High	Councillor Vino Vinojan
Councillor Daniel Humphreys	*Councillor Vic Walker
Councillor Charles James	Councillor Tom Wye
Councillor Susan Jelliss	Councillor Paul Yallop
Councillor Kevin Jenkins	

\*=absent

Councillor Sparkes arrived at 6.55pm during announcements by the Executive Members.

**C/035/15-16 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bradley, Walker, Proudfoot and Morgan.

**C/036/15-16 Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests; no interests were declared.

**C/037/15-16 Questions and Statements from the public**

The Mayor informed Council that no questions to the Executive had been received from members of the public although he invited those present in the gallery to ask questions or make any statements to Council.

No questions were asked.

## **C/038/15-16 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 October 2015, be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Mayor.

## **C/039/15-16 Announcements by the Mayor, Leader, Executive Members, Head of Paid Service**

The Mayor invited Councillor Wye to address Council on the work of High Salvington Mill, the Trust and in particular Mr Casebow and fellow long serving restorers at the Mill. Councillor Wye commended the work of the Trust in preserving a piece of Worthing's heritage for future generations; a Mill had been present on the site since 1615, in favourable conditions the Mill did operate to mill flour. The Mayor presented Mr Casebow and several of the longest serving volunteers from High Salvington Mill, as working technical director of the Trust, Peter had been instrumental in the restoration of the Mill to its present condition.

The Mayor announced a forthcoming Charity event, a Night in the Museum on January 22nd from 7pm encouraging Councillors to attend.

The Leader wished an early Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to those present. He also wished to thank all staff of the Council for their work over the last year where the Council had placed them under more pressure to deliver with less resources. The Leader further explained that his portfolio contained Mayoralty and he did not feel that the meeting should pass without a mention of the pending retirement, at the end of December of Bob, who had chauffeured a number of Mayor's. Bob had ensured that Mayors arrived at functions on time, returned home after an event, that the Insignia was safely stored also acting as a friend and supporter. He thanked Bob Busfield for his work in supporting the Mayoralty and wish him all the best for the future.

A number of former Mayors in the Chamber stood to comment on Bob's work with them during their Mayoral Year and how much they had valued his support and guidance.

Councillor Val Turner, as Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing addressed Council on Child sexual exploitation and the work of the West Sussex Children's Safeguarding Board. Explaining that the Council had a responsibility to young people she encouraged fellow councillors and council officers to learn the warning signs and to pledge their support in the fight against Child Sexual Exploitation

The Chief Executive announced that Rayner Surgical Group Limited had opened their new £25 million Headquarters and sterile production facility in Dominion Way at the end of November. The company made optical lenses with a successful overseas market. The relocation from Hove brought 200 or so jobs to the area which was beginning to gain a cluster of high tech bio-science and bio health companies. Comment was made by the company of the support and assistance afforded by the Councils Economic Development Team which had smoothed the process of the re-location.

## **C/040/15-16 Items raised under the urgency provisions**

There were no urgent items for Council.

## **C/041/15-16 Recommendations from the Executive and Committees to Council**

Council had before it recommendations from Joint Governance Committee and the Joint Strategic Committee, as detailed as item 7 on pages 5 to 13, including additional pages, of the Council agenda.

### **Item A Joint Governance Committee - 24 November 2015**

#### **(i) Members Allowances**

Councillor Sparkes as the Joint Chairman presented the Committee's recommendation item 7A1 on page 5 of the agenda; proposing an amendment to the travelling and subsistence recommendations as follows adding the wording '*that the local agreement to pay out of Sussex mileage rates will not apply to Councillors*'.

The recommendation and amendment was seconded by Councillor Murphy.

On a vote the following was noted: For: 31 Against: 0 Abstention: 2

**Resolved** that Worthing Borough Council adopt Option 1, as amended:-

- that the basic allowance be referenced to the outcome of the Officers' NJC Pay bargaining agreement for a period of four years until March 2020/2021;
- that Members be allowed the option to accept more than one Special Responsibility Allowance should they be undertaking more than one special responsibility;
- that a Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier of (x 0.25) be introduced for the Vice Chairman of the Joint Governance Committee;
- that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Licensing Committee be raised to (x 0.75);
- that a Special Responsibility Allowance multiplier of (x 0.5) be introduced for the Mayor of Worthing;

#### **Childcare Allowance / Carers Allowance / Travel and Subsistence Allowance**

- that Childcare Allowance (contribution towards the costs of employing a carer for children) should be paid at £10.25 per hour, the panel investigated this cost and found that £10.25 was sufficient to cover the costs of childcare and should be maintained at this rate;
- that the rate for carers allowance should be differentiated from the child care allowance and set at up to £15 per hour;
- that travelling & subsistence should be paid at the appropriate rates set by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, from time to time, and based on claims submitted by Members but that the local agreement to pay out of Sussex mileage rates will not apply to Councillors'.

## **(ii) Code of Corporate Governance**

Councillor Sparkes as the Joint Chairman presented the Committee's recommendation 7A 2 on page 9 of the agenda; the recommendation was seconded by Councillor Smytherman.

On a vote the following was noted: For: 31 Against: 0 Abstention: 2

**Resolved** the Code of Corporate Governance be included within the Constitution.

## **Item B - Joint Strategic Committee - 3 December 2015**

### **(i) Capital Investment programme 2016/17 to 2018/19**

The Leader of the Council presented the Committee's recommendation item 7B 1 on new page 11 of the agenda; the recommendation was seconded by Councillor Val Turner.

On a vote the following was noted: For: 31 Against: 0 Abstention: 2

**Resolved** that Council approved the amended 3 Year Capital Programmes.

### **(ii) 2nd Capital Investment programme and Projects Monitoring 2015/16**

The Leader of the Council presented the Committee's recommendation item 7B 2 on new page 13 of the agenda; the recommendation was seconded by Councillor Murphy.

On a vote the following was noted: For: 31 Against: 0 Abstention: 2

**Resolved** that Council add a new scheme to the capital programme 'Refurbishment of the Tennis Courts at Homefield Park' to provide a new Multi-Use Games Area funded by S106 contributions.

## **C/042/15-16 Leader's Report on decisions taken by the Executive**

The Leader of the Council presented his report on decisions taken by the Executive since the last Ordinary meeting of the Council; which were detailed in Item 8, on new pages 15-18 on the agenda.

The Leader made a summary of decisions taken highlighting the Council's forward thinking, its Digital Strategy and action taken by the Communities Team with troubled families.

No questions were asked of the Leader or the Executive Members.

## **C/043/15-16 Members Questions under Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 12**

The Proper Officer had received three questions from Members under CPR 12, from Councillors Sunderland and James.

Councillor Sunderland addressed the Executive Member for Resources:

"Last year there was a fund set aside for people who had difficulty paying Council Tax when they were previously exempt. I understand that £40,000 was needed to help out.

Whilst I appreciate that some situations will have changed and the help will no longer be needed I am already getting calls from people whose situation has not changed worried that they will not be able to manage without it.

In the future Universal credit might make the difference that is needed to help in these situations,

However for next financial year **could you please confirm that this help will still be available** as there is presumably £40,000 left from the original £80,000 that was set aside."

Councillor Nolan, Executive Member for Resources responded:

The Council has set up an annual budget for a hardship fund for claimants of Council Tax Support. This budget will remain in place at £80,000 per year part funded by the County Council, currently £40,000 has been spent.

The money is in the base budget and the savings proposals for next year were discussed at JSC in early December. This budget was left in its entirety as Cllr Sunderland, who was in the public gallery, will be aware.

There was no supplementary question.

Councillor James addressed the Executive Member for the Environment:

'In the Revenue Budget Summary Statement 2015/16 - 2020/21– there is an item under **Committed Growth** for "**Additional maintenance costs associated with Splashpoint Swimming Pool**" *amounting to £60,000 a year and for the next 5 years – totalling £300,000.*

'I understand from answers provided at the last JOSC meeting, by Officers, this is because of a mechanical failure which needs rectifying.

'Could the Cabinet Member give a more detailed answer as to why this has occurred? in what is a new building, and why is it that local taxpayers are picking up the bill, and not the contractors?

The Executive Member for the Environment welcomed the opportunity to once again promote the Splashpoint facility mentioning the 60,000 visits per month to the centre and a 10% increase in Fit4 membership

Splashpoint being a much more modern facility than the previous Aquarena and as such employed new high technology services (Ground Source Heat pumps/ Environmental Mgt system/ Movable floor etc).

The cost of maintenance of this building is therefore going to be higher than the previous Aquarena, and also as a new building there were a number of 'snagging' issues. So far this year, the Council had spent £70,000 against a budget of £40,000.

Under the terms of our contract with South Down Leisure Trust, the Council is liable to compensate the Trust for lost income if the pool is closed for an extended period due to any defects, consequently it is in the Council's best financial interests to make sure that the pool remains open and is safe for the public.

The facility was very busy however some of the problems could be Contractor matters. When possible matters would be made public.

Councillor James addressed the Leader:

'There is a considerable amount of refurbishment taking place inside the Town Hall, I presume motivated by the new initiative to open up the Town Hall for Weddings, and Civil Ceremonies, which is to be applauded.

'Has consideration been given to the small green areas around the exterior of the Town Hall, to make them more attractive, and to further enhance the overall experience and appeal, to potential users of the Town Hall?

'I understand from the JOSC meeting of the 26 November, that no specific budget has been allocated for these areas, could that be considered in conjunction with the Town Hall refurbishment?

The Leader responded:

The recent refurbishments inside the Town Hall (painting on 1st floor corridors and areas/new balcony carpet) were items that have been programmed for some time as part of our Property Maintenance Programme and have been budgeted for. Whilst these facilities will be enjoyed by those tying the knot, they will be beneficial to all users of the Town Hall and help maintain the listed building. The grassed areas outside the front of the building have purposely been left as easy to maintain areas and are maintained well by our Parks team.

With the council's current financial situation it would be difficult for significant expenditure to take place but he encouraged the Community to come forward and help; he would be willing to join Councillor James in donning gloves and working with volunteers on the project.

### **C/034/15-16 Motions without Notice**

Council had before it a Motion without Notice submitted by the Joint Governance Committee, a copy had been circulated to all Members as item 10.

The Joint Chairman, Councillor Sparkes introduce the item, seconded by Councillor Smytherman.

The recommendation was to rescind part of the previous decision made by the Council, that the Council would not record Part B matters when members of the press and public had been excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Local Government Act.

Members rose to express their sadness that the decision by the Council to be open and transparent in its decision making had been curtailed by Adur District Council; who had not agreed with the recommendation from the Joint Governance Committee that all, including close sessions of joint meetings, of the Council and committees should be recorded.

A number of speakers could not understand the rationale behind the decision to prevent the recording of closed discussions stating that those Adur Councillors who were present were unable to fully justify the decision.

Noting that the Council was working in partnership with Adur, Members expressed the view that there had to be give and take, expecting that over time the reluctance of the other council would diminish and Adur would re-consider its position; it was made clear that Members expected the matter to return for debate at the Joint Governance Committee within the year.

A proposal was made by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Smytherman that Worthing Council continued with its decision to record Part B matters of its sovereign meetings where Adur District Council members were not present.

On a vote on the amendment there were For 6 Against 24 Abstentions 3

On the original motion there were For 27 Against 3 Abstentions 3

**Resolved** that Worthing Borough Council, amend the previous decision to resolve to digitally record its Council and Committee meetings, including Joint meetings with Adur District Council, to exclude all parts of all meetings where the press and public are excluded under the Local Government Act due to exempt information being discussed.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.55 pm, it having commenced at 6.30pm.

Mayor