



WORTHING BOROUGH
COUNCIL

21 May 2024

**Worthing Council Meeting
21 May 2024**

Council Chamber
Town Hall, Chapel Road,
Worthing

6.00 pm

Agenda

13 May 2024

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL are hereby summoned to attend for the following business:

Part A

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

Members and Officers must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in relation to any business on the agenda. Declarations should also be made at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting.

If in doubt, contact the Legal or Democratic Services representative for this meeting.

- 3. Questions from the public**

Director for Sustainability and Resources:
Paul Brewer
Adur & Worthing Councils,
Town Hall, Chapel Road,
Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1HA

To receive any questions from members of the public addressed to Members of the Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11. There is up to 5 minutes for each question, one supplementary question may be asked arising from the original question.

Questions must relate to any matter the Council has power or which affects the Borough, except no questions may be asked in relation to

- a. A specific planning or licensing application
- b. A specific staffing appointment or appeal, or Standards determination

Public question time will last up to 30 minutes; questions will be taken in the order of receipt.

The deadline for submission of questions is **Thursday 16 May 2024**. Questions to be submitted to democratic.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk

4. Motion on Notice (Pages 5 - 8)

To consider a Motion on Notice, submitted by the Proper Officer on behalf of Councillor Kevin Jenkins, detailed as item.

5. Items raised under urgency provisions

To consider any items the Mayor has agreed are urgent.

Part B - Not for Publication – Exempt Information Reports

None.



Director for Sustainability and Resources

Recording of this meeting

The Council will be voice recording the meeting, including public question time. The recording will be available on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting. The Council will not be recording any discussions in Part B of the agenda (where the press and public have been excluded).

For Democratic Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:

Neil Terry
Democratic Services Manager & Deputy
Monitoring Officer
01903 221073
neil.terry@adur-worthing.gov.uk

For Legal Services enquiries relating to this meeting please contact:

Joanne Lee
Assistant Director and Monitoring Officer
01903 221134
Joanne.lee@adur-worthing.gov.uk



Extraordinary Council Meeting
21 May 2024

WORTHING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Ward(s) Affected: All

Motion on Notice

Report by the Director for Sustainability & Resources

Officer Contact Details:-

Neil Terry

Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

01903 221073

neil.terry@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The report before Council sets out a motion received from Councillor Kevin Jenkins which has been seconded by Councillor Richard Nowak.
- 1.2. Council is asked to consider and debate the motion prior to determining Part One and referring Part Two to the Leader of Worthing Borough Council for determination under provisions set out in paragraph 14 of the Council Procedure Rules (part 4 of the Council Constitution - Rules of Procedure).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The motion before Council at Annex A to this report, has two distinct parts, it is therefore recommended that:-

- 1) Members consider, debate and determine Part 1 of the Motion; and
- 2) That Part 2 of the Motion be referred for determination by the Leader upon receipt of an officer report containing costs and options.

3. Context

- 3.1 A motion on notice has been received from Councillor Kevin Jenkins, (attached as Annex A).
- 3.2 The content of the motion is relevant to a matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties and which specifically affects the Borough.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 Motions considered by Full Council are done so under part 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules and are debated under rules set out under part 16 of the Council Procedure Rules.
- 4.2 The Council is asked to consider, debate and determine Part 1 of the motion and defer consideration and determination of Part 2 of the motion to the Leader of Worthing Borough Council under these rules accordingly.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Worthing Leader will consider whether there are any financial impacts arising from the motion as appropriate.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Rules concerning motions are set out in the Council's Constitution under section 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

Background Papers

None.

Requisition for an Extraordinary Meeting of Worthing Borough Council to consider a Motion to reintroduce the use of the Mayoral robes and the consideration of provision of alternative robes.

In accordance with Section 4.1 of the WBC Constitution, the undersigned call on the Mayor to call an Extraordinary Meeting of Worthing Borough Council to consider this single item of business.

Single Item - By consent of this Chamber reinstatement of the use of the Mayoral robes and consideration of provision of alternative robes

This single item is made up of two separate parts both relating to the one single item.

Part 1 - Immediate reintroduction of the use of the existing Mayoral robes

Part 2 - A separate workstream to consider the opportunity to secure the provision of an alternative Mayoral gown that does not contain animal fur or other like products that may cause any incumbent Mayor not to wish to utilise them.

Signatories to the requisition:

- Cllr Kevin Jenkins
- Cllr Daniel Humphreys
- Cllr Noel Atkins
- Cllr Heather Mercer
- Cllr Russ Cochran

+++++

Part One

In July 2023 through Councillors Walker and Taylor-Beale, this council's ruling Labour group brought forward a motion to desist with the use of Mayoral and Councillor ceremonial robes in all public engagements.

The claim was that this was part of an ambitious agenda for change as part of their aim to be a 'Council for the Community'. In their presentation to this chamber they suggested that this action would encourage greater public participation, particularly amongst the young in the life of the council, in public debate and engagement in this chamber in democracy. Since July that increased participation at various council meetings or in this chamber has not materialised.

The councillors spoke of research, but none was presented in any measurable detail. Nor was there any tangible evidence of public consultation on this proposal with the residents of Worthing. In fact the emphasis of the motion was slanted such that it seemed to favour 'young people' to the exclusion of others and many have since argued that it was discriminatory in that it failed to take account of the views of the wider Worthing population and equally of 'older people' in our town.

The decision to remove all ceremonial robes from public engagements, attracted huge public attention and was widely condemned across many platforms. This council received numerous questions and was subject of a concerted campaign by interested parties. There have even been reports from well respected quarters in our town that the Deputy Leader has promised to review and consider reversing that decision.

One of the biggest groups who were dismayed by this decision was our Veterans. Men and women of all ages and backgrounds, along with their families and friends, who very strongly and passionately felt that discarding the use of the Mayoral robes at the annual Remembrance Parade ceremony was an insult to those who had served, been lost, had returned from service and those that still suffer from their injuries today.

Mayoral robes have been worn by the Mayor of our town since 1890; after 133 years of historic tradition November 2023 will be recorded for prosperity in the history of our town as the year that that tradition was broken and the enduring bond between our council and the veterans was fractured.

As a council we need to show that we are listening, listening to the voices of those that we represent. They are telling us that the decision in July 2023 was wrong, that it was not welcomed and should be reversed. We should be willing to seek to heal that fractured bond and rebuild the trust with residents.

This is wider than simply Remembrance, there are many other key events in the life of our town that are marked by the visible and visual presence of our Mayor.

There are some who have suggested that the Mayoral robes should be altered and the animal fur elements be removed and replaced with a synthetic alternative. We do not agree, the robes as they are, are a historical record, legacy and artefact of our town. To alter them in any way is tantamount to 'historical vandalism'.

When a Mayor takes office they should do so understanding the full weight of the expectation of our town upon their office. That there are traditions and values to be upheld and none should take on that role if they cannot aspire to meet that high standard.

By reversing the appalling decision of July 2023 we can start the healing process in our town and continue the celebration of our heritage. This motion entails no additional budgetary cost to the Council, it simply reinstates the consent of this chamber for the mayoral robes to be worn.

Therefore this requisition proposes, by way of a motion, that the use of the Mayoral robes be reinstated and that these should be worn by the town's mayor, at their discretion, at all public engagements and especially those of significant calendar note in the life of our great town of Worthing.

Part 2

In the 21st Century it is well documented that people's desire or liking of wearing animal furs or similar materials has significantly changed.

To alter the existing Mayoral robes would to many be seen as destruction of our town's history and an act of 'historical vandalism'.

Therefore this requisition proposes, by way of a motion, that a separate workstream to part one above is implemented and that it is tasked to consider the opportunity to secure the provision of an alternative mayoral gown that does not contain animal fur or other like products that may cause any incumbent Mayor to choose not to utilise them.

Together these two parts allow our history as a town to be visibly worn and celebrated, whilst allowing any incumbent Mayor the personal choice as to which gown to wear alongside their chain of office.