

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**

12th April, 2016 at 6.00 pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: The Mayor (Councillor B Price);
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Webb);

Councillors Ahmed, Allcock, Allen, Ashman, Bawa, Carmichael, Cherrington, Costigan, Crompton, S Crompton, Dr T Crompton, K Davies, P Davies, S Davies, Y Davies, Downing, Eaves, Edis, Edwards, Eling, Frear, Garrett, Gavan, Giles, Gill, Goult, Hackett, Hadley, Haque, Hartwell, Hevican, L Horton, R Horton, D Hosell, S Hosell, P M Hughes, P Hughes, Hussain, Dr Jaron, Jarvis, I Jones, O Jones, S Jones, Khatun, Lewis, Lloyd, Marshall, Meehan, Melia, Millard, Phillips, Piper, R Price, Rouf, Rowley, Sandars, Shackleton, Sidhu, Taylor, Tranter, Trow and Underhill.

Apologies: Councillors Dhallu, Moore and Preece.

40/16 **Declaration of Interest**

The following members declared an interest as indicated:-

Agenda Item	Subject	Member	Interest
9	(Cabinet Minute No. 36/16)	Councillors L Horton and P Hughes	Non-Pecuniary - Board Member of Sandwell Leisure Trust.

41/16 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

Meeting of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council –
12th April, 2016

42/16

Testimonial to the Memory of Councillor Darren Cooper,
Leader of Sandwell Council

The Council stood in silent tribute to mark the passing of the Leader of the Council, Darren Cooper.

Darren Cooper was elected to the Council in 1991 at the age of 26, representing Soho and Victoria ward. Following lead member roles in the areas of recreation, leisure and social care, he was elected as Leader of the Council in 2009 and had held this position until his sudden and unexpected death at the age of just 52.

The Mayor and Councillors Eling, Sandars, Edwards, Crompton, Gill, Lewis, P Hughes, L and R Horton, Shackleton, Khatun, Rouf, Ahmed, I Jones, Hackett, R Price, Rowley and Taylor paid tributes to Darren.

In paying tribute to Councillor Cooper, members referred to his work as a local councillor, to his political work locally, regionally and nationally, to his work as a psychiatric nurse for the NHS and as the Leader of Sandwell Council where he used his personal and people skills to manage the largest Labour Group in the country.

Councillor Cooper was recognised for his ambition for change and improvement in Sandwell, the Black Country and more recently in leading that drive for improvement across the region through the establishment of a combined authority for the West Midlands. Members referred to the huge loss of his potential for the future.

The Acting Leader, Councillor Eling, said that the number of condolences that had been received from all around the country was testimony to the impact that Councillor Cooper had made, was making and that his legacy would continue to make. Constituents who knew Darren as their Councillor, staff of the Council who worked with him, political colleagues in Sandwell, across the region and nationally had all been devastated by his loss.

Amongst the many tributes, the Leader was described as a down to earth Black Country lad, a man of the people personified, a mentor and an excellent Leader.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

Meeting of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council –
12th April, 2016

He was highly respected by everyone he worked with and for, he was passionate about the community he served, hard-working, devoted, dedicated, ambitious, and a remarkable man who had both put Sandwell on the map and was a major asset to the region. Mostly, he was regarded as Mr Sandwell.

Members joined the Mayor in extending their condolences to Darren's family.

43/16 **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank Councillors Rowley, Tipper and Frazer who were retiring from the Council at the forthcoming election. The Council joined the Mayor in expressing their gratitude for the hard and devoted work of the members during their time as Sandwell Councillors.

The Mayor wished all existing members of the Council who were re-standing in May, good luck in the elections.

Details of Mayoral engagements since the last meeting of the Council had been circulated to members.

44/16 **Petitions Under Standing Order No. 5**

No petitions were received under Standing Order No. 5.

45/16 **Questions Under Standing Order No. 6**

No questions were received under Standing Order No. 6.

**Meeting of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council –
12th April, 2016**

46/16

**Proposals to Depart from the Local Development Plan at
Unit 1, Churchbridge, Oldbury, B69 2AP**

At the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 16th March 2016, consideration was given to planning application DC/15/58775 in relation to the proposed change of use at Unit 1, Churchbridge, Oldbury to a leisure arena incorporating trampolining, party rooms, café, external alterations and associated parking.

The Planning Committee was minded to approve the application with conditions recommended by the Director - Regeneration and Economy.

The site was allocated as potential strategic high quality employment land in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy. It was, therefore, necessary for the Council to consider whether or not to grant an exception to its policy to allow the application to proceed.

Resolved that an exception to the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and Local Development Plan be allowed in respect of planning application DC/15/58775 (proposed change of use to leisure arena incorporating trampolining, party rooms, café, external alterations and associated parking at Unit 1, Churchbridge, Oldbury, B69 2AP).

47/16

Minutes and Policy/Strategic Recommendations of the Cabinet

The Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 9th March, 2016.

No questions were asked of the Acting Leader.

48/16

**Summary of Matters Considered at the Community Safety,
Highways and Environment Scrutiny Board**

The Vice Chair of the Community Safety, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Board, Councillor Ashman, presented the summary of matters considered at the meeting of the Board held on 23rd March, 2016.

No questions were asked of the Vice Chair of the Board.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

**Meeting of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council –
12th April, 2016**

49/16 **Summary of Matters Considered at the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board**

The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board, Councillor Sandars, presented the summary of matters considered at the meeting of the Board held on 31st March, 2016.

No questions were asked of the Chair of the Board.

50/16 **Minutes of the Audit Committee**

The Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor Sidhu, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 22nd March, 2016.

No questions were asked of the Chair.

51/16 **Minutes of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee**

The Vice Chair of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee, Councillor Haque, presented the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee held on 21st March, 2016.

No questions were asked of the Vice Chair.

The Council considered the recommendation of the Committee on the nomination for the office of Mayor. A proposal from the Acting Leader of the Council with regard to the nomination for Deputy Mayor was also considered.

Resolved:-

- (1) that Councillor Julie Webb be nominated for the office of Mayor of the Borough of Sandwell for the 2016/2017 Municipal Year;

Meeting of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council –
12th April, 2016

- (2) that, subject to her re-election at the May 2016 municipal elections, Councillor Susan Downing be nominated for the office of Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Sandwell for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

(The meeting ended at 7.08 pm)

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