

Minutes of Council

**Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 6.00 pm
in the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: His Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor R Jones;
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Taylor;

Councillors Ahmed, Akhtar, Akpoteni, Allen, Ashman, H Bhullar, Carmichael, Chambers, Chapman, Choudhry, E Costigan, Crompton, Dhallu, Dhariwal, Dunn, Fenton, Fisher, Gavan, Giles, E A Giles, L Giles, E M Giles, G Gill, S Gill, W Gill, Hackett, Hartwell, Hinchliff, A Hussain, Z Hussain, Jalil, S Jones, Kaur, Kausar, Khatun, Lewis, Mabena, Mayo, McVittie, Melia, Millard, Millar, Moore, Owen, Padda, Piper, Preece, Rahman, Randhawa, Rollins, Shackleton, Shaeen, Simms, N Singh, V Smith, Trumpeter, Uddin, J Webb, Wilkes and Williams

Also present: Kim Bromley-Derry – Managing Director Commissioner, Surjit Tour – Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer; Elaine Newsome – Services Manager – Democracy; Suky Suthi-Nagra – Democratic Services Manager; Stephnie Hancock – Senior Democratic Services Officer; Connor Robinson – Democratic Services Officer and Phil Challoner - Civic and Member Services Manager.

84/22

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Abrahams, Allcock, Anandou, Bostan, M Gill, Hughes, O Jones and K Singh.



85/22 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

86/22 Urgent Business

There were no additional items of business to consider.

87/22 Mayor's Announcements

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

In addition, the Mayor expressed his good wishes and that of the Council to Corin Crane, the outgoing Chief Executive of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, and thanked him for his dedication and hard work demonstrated over the last six years to Sandwell and the wider Black Country.

88/22 Petitions

No petitions were received under Standing Order No. 5.

89/22 Written Questions

Questions received under Standing Order No. 6 were asked of the relevant members and responses provided.

90/22 Sandwell Council Improvement Plan

The Leader of the Council introduced the Sandwell Council Improvement Plan.

The Improvement Plan included proposed mechanisms for governance and assurance.

The mechanisms would enable senior officers and members to manage the successful delivery of the Improvement Plan, whilst

also providing all staff, members, the public and other stakeholders with assurance on the progress of the ongoing improvement.

It was recognised that the Improvement Plan would be a living document, one that would need to evolve over time to respond to emerging intelligence and situations. Through the proposed governance arrangements, changes to the Plan would be captured and approved through an agreed Change Control process. To enable the authority to maintain the required pace of its improvement journey, it was proposed that Cabinet be delegated the authority to approve changes to the Improvement Plan as part of regular reporting arrangements.

Resolved that:-

1. the updated Improvement Plan to address the recommendations from external reviews and the proposed reporting mechanisms to ensure progress was managed effectively be approved;
2. delegated authority be given to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Finance and Resources and Managing Director Commissioner, to identify and commit earmarked reserves towards Improvement Plan activities be approve.

91/22

Proposed Departures from the Development Plan at Land At West Bromwich Street, Oldbury, B69 3AT

At the meeting of Planning Committee held on 11 May 2022, consideration was given to planning application DC/21/66339, which sought approval for residential development on land allocated for mixed use in the development plan. Planning Committee approved the planning application with conditions, subject to the departure from the development plan (mixed-use to residential) being considered and ratified by Council.

The site formed part of a mixed-use allocation in the development plan which had not come to fruition. A major residential development had been approved and was under construction on the adjacent site (which was previously approved by Planning Committee and Council), and this development of an additional 13 houses would complement the larger scheme. The departure of

the land use from mixed-use to residential was therefore, considered to be acceptable.

Resolved that approval be given to an exception to the development plan in respect of planning application DC/21/66339 - Proposed 13 No. dwellings including amendment to plot 197 approved under planning application DC/20/64152- land at West Bromwich Street, Oldbury.

92/22

Proposed Departures from the Development Plan at Ervin Amasteel, George Henry Road, Tipton

At the meeting of Planning Committee held on 11 May 2022, consideration was given to planning application DC/21/65853, which sought approval for part demolition of existing buildings and proposed change of use from foundry to scrap metal recycling centre, comprising of new building and installation of sheer, pre-shredder, shredder and down streamer and boundary treatment.

Planning Committee approved the application and now Council would need to approve the departure from the Development Plan before planning permission can be granted.

The land was allocated for employment uses (Class E, B2 and B8; the proposed was a waste use (sui generis), and as such was contrary to adopted council policy. The application site was a vacant foundry site that is 33,907 square metres in area and was located on the eastern side of George Henry Road, Tipton. The site was in an established area of industrial and commercial units with wider area to the east of the site characterised by residential properties. The proposal would bring a large vacant site back into use.

Resolved that approval be given to an exception to the Development Plan in respect of planning application DC/21/65853 planning application for part demolition of existing buildings and proposed change of use from foundry to scrap metal recycling centre, comprising of new building and installation of sheer, pre-shredder, shredder and down streamer and boundary treatment – Ervin Amasteel, George Henry Road, Tipton.

93/22

Minutes of the Governance and Constitution Review Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Constitution Review Committee held on 27 May 2022 were received.

The Council considered the recommendation of the Governance and Constitution Review Committee on the following matter:-

93/22a

Constitution Review - Cabinet Advisors

Council considered the revised descriptions of Cabinet Advisors and the change of name to Performance Champions.

Resolved that the revised role descriptions for Cabinet Advisors, to be renamed Performance Champions, be approved and the Performance Champion – Neighbourhoods and Lead Member provide a bi-annual report to Full Council on the work of the Performance Champions.

94/22

Extension of Appointment of Independent Member for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

At Council on 17 July 2018, approval was given that Mr Jay Hussain be appointed as Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, for a four-year period ending on 16 July 2022. The term was due to come to an end and Mr J Hussain had indicated that he would be happy to extend his term of office in the role.

Resolved that approval be given to extend the appointment of Mr Jay Hussain as Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for the four year period ending 15 July 2026.

95/22

Notice of Motions

The Council proceeded to consider motions received under Standing Order No. 7.

95/22a Environmental Impact of Cable Ties

It was moved by Councillor W Gill and seconded by Councillor Williams: -

“That this Council reaffirms its commitment to tackling the climate crisis through the recognition of the impact that single use cable ties can have and moves to resolve through the banning of political posters from Council property in order to limit the usage of single use cable ties”.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 11 (15(b)), Councillor L Giles called for the matter to be put to the vote. The motion received the required support and the request was achieved.

On being put to the vote, the motion was defeated.

95/22b Extend Free Parking Across Sandwell

It was moved by Councillor Trumpeter and seconded by Councillor Dunn: -

“As we have seen in Wednesbury Town Centre recently, and as we see in our other town centres on the lead up to Christmas, free parking in council owned car parks can be offered by this council with minimal fuss when it suits. Free parking benefits residents, shoppers and our fantastic local businesses in our town centres by ensuring that shoppers spend money in the towns rather than being drawn to out-of-town shopping centres that offer free car parking.

Over 20,000 people backed the Sandwell Conservatives calls for free weekend parking in our borough at the recent elections. Therefore, this council moves to resolve to explore this and invites the executive to consider extending free car parking in all other town centres until October 2022, in line with the recent Wednesbury scheme”.

In accordance with Standing Order No.7, Councillor Ahmed moved the following amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Gavan:-

“As we have seen in Wednesbury Town Centre recently, the council has offered one car park free of charge while regeneration of the town takes place. The regeneration project is an excellent

example of how this council is taking steps forward to increase footfall to generate business into the town centre.

On the lead up to Christmas, free parking for two Saturdays is available in all council owned car parks. This Free parking benefits residents, shoppers and our fantastic local businesses in our town centres by ensuring that shoppers spend money locally in the towns rather than being drawn to shopping centres out of the borough of Sandwell that offer free car parking. Along with the combined authority we will continue to promote the use of public transport and other clear air methods of transport.

Therefore, this council resolves to explore options by the executive to consider extending free car parking in other town centres where regeneration is taking place, in line with the Wednesbury Scheme. The council must in doing so ensure that its commitment to tackling the climate crisis and health issues through recognition of reducing particulate matter, Carbon Monoxide and Nitrogen Oxides in our Town Centres is at the forefront of any decision taken”.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and, having been carried, it was RESOLVED accordingly.

95/22c Off Road Motorbikes

It was moved by Councillor Fisher and seconded by Councillor Chapman: -

“That this council believes that council officers, elected members, neighbourhood policing and local residents do a great job trying to tackle off road motorbikes, but more support is needed. With off road motorbikes being one of the highest reported incidents of anti-social behaviour in Sandwell. The safety of local residents and their pets, are at risk with the nuisance they cause, along with the destruction to our parks and green spaces, this cannot continue. Will the leader of the council agree to write to the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster calling for the re-introduction of a dedicated off-road motorbike team that can focus solely on this issue and give it the attention it deserves”.

In accordance with Standing Order No.7, Councillor Moore moved the following amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Piper:-

“That this Council believes that Council officers, elected members, neighbourhood policing and local residents do a great job trying to tackle off road motorbikes, but more support is needed. Notes that off road motorbikes and the nuisance that they cause is one of the highest reported incidents of anti-social behaviour in Sandwell. The safety of local residents and their pets, are at risk with the nuisance they cause, along with the destruction to our parks and green spaces; this cannot continue. This Council resolves to write to the Chief Constable of West Midlands, who is responsible for operational policing decisions, to call for the re-introduction of a dedicated off-road motorbike team that can focus solely on this issue and give it the attention it deserves; and further calls on the Council to write to the Home Secretary to ask her to review the law, guidance and training governing police pursuits”.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and, having been carried, it was RESOLVED accordingly.

Meeting ended at 7.16pm

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