

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held in Guildhall, Lichfield on Monday 11 December 2023 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors A Hughes (Mayor), J Anketell, H Ashton, D Baker, C Ball, J Blackman, R Bragger, J Christie, K Farrelly, M Field, A Fox, R Harvey-Coggins, S Hollingsworth, P Knight, A Lax, J Marshall, P Mc Dermott, C Pinder- Smith, P Ray, D Robertson, A Rushton, S Schafer, J Smith, E Strain, M Warfield, B Watkins, and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillors J Eagland and C Greator.

A MINUTES SILENCE WAS HELD IN MEMORY OF FORMER COUNCILLOR JAYNE DEYUS-HINCH WHO DIED ON 28 OCTOBER 2023, AND BRENDA BROWN, FORMER COUNCILLOR, MAYORESS AND SHERIFF'S LADY WHO DIED ON 19 NOVEMBER 2023

68 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor detailed the events and functions that she had attended, including Remembrance Sunday, the Christmas Lights Switch On, and several Carol services. The Mayor also took the opportunity to thank City Council Officers for all their support during the year.

69 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None

70 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 4 October 2023 (Nos 49-67) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.*

71 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor D Robertson noted the response received from the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner following the submission of a letter by the Council on 5 October 2023. Councillor Robertson thanked his fellow Councillors for their input and a valuable discussion.

72 PLANNING COMMITTEE (DELEGATED AUTHORITY)

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 7 September to 7 December 2023 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority, be received.*

73 JOHNSON BIRTHPLACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Members considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee that took place on 31 October 2023 and noted the reprofiling of the 2023/24 budget and the priorities for 2024/25.

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee held on 31 October 2023 be adopted.*

74 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Committee held on 1 November 2023 noting the success of the Green Networking event held in the Guildhall on 29 November 2023. Councillor A Lax requested that the notes from the meeting be circulated to all members as soon as they were available from the organisers.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Committee held on 1 November 2023 be adopted.

75 GRANTS COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Grants Committee held on 22 November 2023. Councillor C Ball reminded all members that the deadline for submission of Grant applications is 3 January 2024 and requested that all Grants Committee members attend the meeting on 12 February 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Grants Committee held on 22 November 2023 be adopted.

76 MARKETS WORKING GROUP

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Markets Working Group held on 23 November 2023. Members' particular attention was drawn to the recommendation that Council creates markets to take place on 20 and 21 December 2023, and the implications of Council's adoption of that recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Markets Working Group on 23 November 2023 be adopted, with council utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III to create markets to take place on 20 and 21 December 2023.

77 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 7 December 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 7 December 2023 be adopted.

78 FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT – 1 APRIL to 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Members noted the financial progress report for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. Councillor P Ray highlighted the positive CIL spend and the benefits CIL can bring to the community. Councillor D Robertson commended the Responsible Financial Officer, Internal Auditor, and Accounts Officer for their excellent work.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

79 LICHFIELD CITY CENTRE – PURPLE FLAG ACCREDITATION

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which provided information on proposed 'Purple Flag' accreditation for the City, which recognises excellence in managing evening/night time economies, and the invitation from SCC and LDC to the City Council to support the proposal and to be actively involved in the associated working group. Cllr P Ray stated that this was a positive step to promote business and the local economy, but enquired as to any costs that may fall on LCC. Councillor D Robertson confirmed no costs were currently envisaged to fall on LCC, and if that were to change it would be a matter to be brought before Council. Cllr A Lax asked whether an update could be made available for January Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Council supports the proposal to obtain 'Purple Flag' status for Lichfield City**
- 2. Councillor B Watkins be nominated to represent the City Council on the associated Working Group**

80 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted the resignation of former Cllr Janice Greaves from her role as LCC representative to Dovehouse Community Gardens.

RESOLVED: That Councillor P Knight be appointed represent LCC at Dovehouse Community gardens alongside existing representative Cllr J Smith, and that the best thanks of the Council be extended to former Councillor Janice Greaves for representing the Council.

81 OFFICERS' REPORT

Councillor D Robertson commended the Civic Officer and Royal British Legion Volunteers for facilitating the Remembrance Sunday service and wreath laying ceremony, and commented on the Christmas Lights Switch On event, noting how well the event was attended. Cllr J Smith welcomed the planting of the laurel hedge against the traffic noise barrier along the new section of the bypass. Cllr P Ray highlighted the Lichfield Litter Legends community event for which LCC has given a grant to cover the cost of the skip provision. Cllr P McDermott thanked the Town Clerk and Open Spaces Officer for their work to date on improving signage on the cycleway adjacent to Stowe Pool, and stated he was looking forward to the implementation of the new line painting when, in accordance with contractor advice, the project is progressed in Spring 2024.

Councillor S Hollingsworth commended officers for the clarity of communication of the Officers report.

RESOLVED: That the Report be noted

82 CANAL LAND AT CRICKET LANE – TRANSFER TO LCC

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report and the associated request from SCC for the transfer of approximately 105m² of LCC land to SCC as Highway Maintainable at Public Expense to facilitate the junction improvements proposed for the site. On a separate but related issue, Cllr D Baker confirmed that she and Cllr J Smith were due to walk the route in the coming days to consider the tree retention/removal proposals as submitted by the Trust.

RESOLVED:

- a) Subject to legal duties as set out at (b) and (c) below, the Council agrees in principle to transfer the land marked in red on the plan within the agenda report to Staffordshire County Council as Highway Maintainable at Public Expense.**
- b) That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, and the General Disposal Consent 2003, the Council advertise its proposals.**

- c) That the Council consider any objections received following public consultation prior to any decision confirming the transfer of the land.*

83 SALARIES BELOW THE REAL LIVING WAGE

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which provided detail on the implications of the 2023/24 pay award, and the discussions arising from the recent meeting of the Staffing Committee regarding the 'Real Living Wage'. Cllr D Robertson highlighted the importance of paying staff an appropriate salary and welcomed the proposal.

RESOLVED: *In accordance with Staffing Committee recommendations, Council to ensure all staff are remunerated to at least the level of the RLW (currently £12.00/hour) by means of permanent increase to SCP5 (£12.18/hour) for staff currently salaried below that level (option 2 above, cost approx. £2,900 per annum). The arrangements to be backdated to 1 December 2023.*

84 MENOPAUSE POLICY

Members considered the draft policy which emerged from discussions at the recent meeting of the Staffing Committee.

RESOLVED: *That the draft LCC Menopause Policy be adopted.*

85 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: *That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the periods:*

- *1 August 2023 to 31 August 2023 in the sum of £157,823.40 General Account, and £858.31 Imprest Account.*
- *1 September 2023 to 30 September 2023 in the sum of £218,295.79 General Account, and £1010.40 Imprest Account.*

86 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: *that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting.*

87 STAFFING COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 2 November 2023.

RESOLVED: *That the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 2 November 2023 be adopted.*

88 DARWIN HALL

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which provided an update on the roof and drainage work at Darwin Hall and the process of obtaining quotations and commencing on site following the roof issues encountered at Curborough Community Centre. Councillor H Ashton thanked the Leader and Town Clerk for keeping members updated on Darwin Hall and Councillor P Knight thanked the Town Clerk and Leader for their swift action to progress the emergency works at Curborough Community Centre.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Council notes the actions taken in regard to Darwin Hall and Curborough Community Centre.**
- 2. In relation to Curborough CC, Council approves the use of Standing Orders as To Contracts 3 (iv) to progress the necessary remedial work in an emergency with the agreement of the Leader of the Council, appointing Messenger BCR to carry out the roof works as detailed in the architect's schedule of works.**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.30PM

MAYOR