

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 26 July 2022 commencing at 6:00 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Deputy Mayor

Councillor J W Murphy
Councillor A S Reece

and Councillors:

G F Blackwell, G J Bocking, C L J Carter, C M Cody, M Dean, R D East, J H Evetts, P A Godwin, M A Gore, D W Gray, D J Harwood, M L Jordan, E J MacTiernan, J R Mason, H C McLain, P D McLain, C E Mills, J P Mills, C Reid, J K Smith, P E Smith, R J G Smith, V D Smith, R J Stanley, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, S Thomson, M J Williams and P N Workman

CL.23 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 23.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 23.2 The Mayor thanked Canon Paul Williams for undertaking the role of Chaplain and wished him luck in his new post – he indicated this was his last Council meeting. In addition, the Mayor welcomed the Council's new Chief Executive to his first Council meeting having officially taken up his new role.

CL.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 24.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Berliner, R A Bird, K J Cromwell, H C Munro, P W Ockelton, C Softley and R J E Vines.

CL.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 25.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 25.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

CL.26 MINUTES

- 26.1 The Minutes of the meetings held on 10 and 17 May 2022, and the Extraordinary meeting held on 8 June 2022, were approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

CL.27 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 27.1 There were no items from members of the public.

CL.28 MEMBER QUESTIONS PROPERLY SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

28.1 There were no Member questions.

CL.29 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Interim Medium Term Financial Strategy

29.1 At its meeting on 1 June 2022, the Executive Committee had considered the interim Medium Term Financial Strategy and recommended that it be adopted.

29.2 The report which was considered by the Executive Committee had been circulated with the Agenda for the current meeting at Pages No. 18-33.

29.3 The Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee proposed the recommendation of the Executive Committee and it was seconded.

29.4 Upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED That the interim Medium Term Financial Strategy be **ADOPTED**.

Council Plan 2020/24 Refresh

29.5 At its meeting on 1 June 2022, the Executive Committee had considered the Council Plan 2020/24 refresh and recommended that it be adopted.

29.6 The report which was considered by the Executive Committee had been circulated with the Agenda for the current meeting at Pages No. 34-56.

29.7 The Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee proposed the recommendation of the Executive Committee and it was seconded.

29.8 A Member expressed the view that it would be helpful to have been provided with a list of why items had been added/removed and the Head of Corporate Services undertook to provide this following the meeting. It was understood that some items had been removed because they had been completed but there were some items which had been completed and were still included, for example the solar canopy, and some which had been deleted even though they were still ongoing, for example, "supporting community led biodiversity projects across the Borough". It was felt the whole document was a little unclear. In response, the Head of Corporate Services explained that things described as 'business as usual' were reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within the performance tracker so those that were not included in the Council Plan were overseen in other ways. This included the small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment which had been implemented in August and was now business as usual meaning it had been deleted from the Council Plan.

29.9 It was proposed and seconded that "supporting community led biodiversity projects across the Borough", on Page No. 51 under the heading 'Promote a healthy and flourishing environment in the borough', be left in the Council Plan document.

29.10 Referring to the economic growth section of the Council Plan, a Member indicated that there were areas in the Borough other than Tewkesbury Town that needed redevelopment/improvement. In response, the Lead Member for Built Environment confirmed that the Council did fund regeneration across the Borough but the Heritage Action Zone funding was from the government specifically for the Tewkesbury Town Heritage Action Zone which was the reason that was included in the Council Plan. In general she felt it was heartening to see the amount the Council had achieved in the last three years.

29.11 Upon the amendment being proposed and seconded, it was

RESOLVED That the Council Plan refresh be **ADOPTED**, subject to the reinstatement of the wording "supporting community led

biodiversity projects across the Borough” on Page No. 51 under the heading ‘Promote a healthy and flourishing environment in the borough’.

CL.30 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

- 30.1 Attention was drawn to the Audit and Governance Committee’s annual report 2021/22, circulated with the Agenda at Pages No. 57-67, which Members were asked to consider.
- 30.2 The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee expressed the view that the content of the report demonstrated the breadth of activity undertaken by his Committee and dispelled the myth that it only dealt with financial matters. It received a variety of reports from different sources to give assurance that systems, procedures and policies were operating as they should be. Similar to 2020/21, that assurance had been diluted over the last year, mainly due to the Internal Audit team remaining deployed to support the administration of business grants. The Team had now returned to their normal work now the business cell, which had administered the whole raft of COVID-19 business grants, had been stood down. The cell had delivered over £30million of grants to the business community. Despite the closedown of the cell, a number of Officers from it were now administering the government’s Council tax/energy rebate scheme. In terms of the Council’s statement of accounts 2020/21, the external auditors had provided a glowing reference for the Finance team, which, even while largely working remotely, with resources also deployed to the business cell, together with the added complexity of continually monitoring the budget and completing a plethora of government returns as a result of the pandemic, had still produced an accurate set of accounts. Looking ahead, it was refreshing to return to normality and there was a great opportunity for the Committee to support the Council through its future challenges.
- 30.3 The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee thanked Internal Audit for their hard work on the business grants administration and the Finance team for its work on the accounts. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED That the Audit and Governance Committee’s annual report 2021/22 be **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 6:40 pm