

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Council held at the Council Offices,
Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 7 November 2023 commencing at
6:00 pm**

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Deputy Mayor

Councillor I Yates
Councillor P N Workman

and Councillors:

H J Bowman, C M Cody, S R Dove, P A Godwin, M A Gore, D W Gray, S Hands, M L Jordan,
E J MacTiernan, J R Mason, H C McLain, P W Ockelton, E C Skelt, J K Smith, R J Stanley,
H Sundarajoo and R J E Vines

CL.60 ANNOUNCEMENTS

60.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.

CL.61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

61.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L A Agg, N D Adcock,
E M Dimond-Brown, A Hegenbarth, G C Madle, P D McLain, K Pervaiz, G M Porter,
P D Smith, M R Stewart and M G Sztymiak.

CL.62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

62.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Code of Conduct
which was adopted by the Council on 24 January 2023 and took effect on 1
February 2023.

62.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

CL.63 HONORARY ALDERMEN

63.1 The Mayor thanked those present for attending the meeting to witness the
conferring of the Office of Honorary Alderman on eight former Councillors. He
expressed what an honour and privilege it was to have the opportunity to bestow
such a title upon those that had done so much for the Borough during their time in
Office. The Mayor indicated that, unfortunately, one of those being honoured, Gill
Blackwell, was unable to attend the meeting that evening but confirmed that her
certificate and gifts would be delivered to her after the meeting.

- 63.2 Councillor Stanley proposed that, in recognition of their public service to their community and the borough, the under-mentioned persons have conferred upon them the title of Honorary Aldermen:
- Rob Bird
Gill Blackwell
Mike Dean
John Evetts
John Murphy
Andrew Reece
Vernon Smith
Philip Surman
- 63.3 The motion was seconded by Councillor Mason who indicated that it was with great pleasure that he was seconding the honouring of the eight past Members with the Office of Honorary Alderman.
- 63.4 Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was carried and each new Honorary Alderman in attendance was presented with their certificate and gifts to mark the occasion.
- 63.5 Councillor Mason expressed what a pleasure it was for him to speak in support of Rob Bird. Rob had been elected in 2011 and represented the Cleeve West Ward. Probably his greatest challenge during his time as Leader of the Council was the COVID-19 pandemic which had brought with it a great amount of uncertainty and apprehensiveness which he had navigated with integrity. Rob was not afraid to challenge where necessary and had stood his ground to achieve the best outcomes for Tewkesbury Borough. He had represented the Council brilliantly during his time as Leader and it was a great pleasure to see him honoured with this title. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman Rob Bird indicated how appreciative he was to receive this honour. There were many reasons why he had been proud to be part of Tewkesbury Borough Council - he had always thought it was very professional and he was proud to be part of that professional approach to doing what was right for the residents it served. Tewkesbury Borough Council was always ahead of the curve which had been particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when it had become clear that the authority was already doing the work being discussed by others. The professionalism of Officers had been backed up with the commitment and pragmatism of its elected Members who always worked together effectively when necessary and he hoped that would continue.
- 63.6 Councillor Gore expressed how delighted she was to support Gill Blackwell in becoming an Honorary Alderman. Gill had served on the Council from May 2011 representing Churchdown Brookfield with Hucclecote Ward and held the office of Mayor twice during her 12 years of service, raising funds for local charities. She was a fantastic ambassador as Mayor of Tewkesbury Borough, even when her term of office was extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic which demanded an even higher degree of commitment. Gill had sat on a number of Committees over the years and held Lead Member roles. She had always battled for her community and the borough as a whole. Gill was a very kind and thoughtful lady who was always on hand to help any of her fellow Councillors and, from a personal perspective, she had offered her great support over the years for which she was very grateful.
- 63.7 Councillor Mason expressed what a great pleasure it was to speak in support of Mike Dean. Mike had first been elected in 2011 representing Cleeve Hill Ward and had served on several Committees. He had been Mayor during 2014/15 which he had very much enjoyed. Mike was forward thinking and, as the Lead Member for Customer Focus had been an early champion for e-government. The Council's

position in that regard was in no small part down to Mike and his determination to promote it as the way forward for the authority. This was a well deserved honour and he wished him all the best. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman Mike Dean indicated that he had enjoyed his time at Tewkesbury Borough Council and it was an absolute pleasure to receive this honour tonight.

- 63.8 Councillor Gore indicated that she was delighted to be able to speak in support of John Evetts. John had served on the Council from May 1991 representing Isbourne Ward and had sat on many Committees over those 32 years which had included chairing the Standards Committee. He had also chaired Planning Committee for a number of years and his vast amount of knowledge and experience of architecture had always made for interesting journeys across the borough on Planning Committee Site Visits. His ability to chair Planning Committee meetings was second to none - he was a very strong chair with fantastic communication and leadership skills who ensured high standards were maintained. She personally had the privilege of joining John in Isbourne Ward when it became a two Member Ward in 2019 and she thanked him for his help and support during that time. John's service and dedication to his role and his Ward over the last 32 years had been exemplary and the award of Honorary Alderman was thoroughly deserved. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman John Evetts shared an anecdote from his time as Chair of the Planning Committee and offered his sincere thanks to the Council for this honour, which he would treasure.
- 63.9 Councillor Mason expressed his pleasure in speaking in support of John Murphy. John was one of three Members elected to represent Winchcombe Ward in 2019 and had done an awful lot during his relatively short time as a Borough Councillor including chairing the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to which he had dedicated a lot of time, sitting on a number of Working Groups and representing the borough as Mayor in 2022/23. John was greatly missed and was thoroughly deserving of this award. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman John Murphy expressed his delight at seeing so many familiar faces this evening. He had a terrific time as a Borough Councillor and missed it very much.
- 63.10 Councillor Jill Smith indicated that she was pleased to speak in support of Andrew Reece. Andrew had served on the Council from May 2015 and represented Cleeve St Michael's Ward. He had been Deputy Mayor in 2019, going on to be Mayor in 2021. During his time as a Borough Councillor he had been Support Member for Finance and Asset Management and had sat on Committees such as Planning and Licensing as well as representing the Council on various outside bodies. Andrew had always met his duties with enthusiasm and humour and had been a wonderful ambassador for the borough raising funds for charities including Scoo-B-Doo and the Severn Area Rescue Association whilst Mayor. She was delighted that he was receiving the well-deserved title of Honorary Alderman for Tewkesbury Borough. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman Andrew Reece indicated that he was still adjusting to not been a Borough Councillor and, although there were some benefits, he was missing the friendship and fun. He had particularly enjoyed his time on Planning Committee and as Support Member for Finance and Asset Management. He wished the Borough Council luck for the future and thanked everyone for this great honour.
- 63.11 Councillor Vines expressed his pleasure at speaking in support of Vernon Smith. Vernon had been elected in May 2011 representing the Tewkesbury area which he had served brilliantly during his time as a Borough Councillor – he was known and approachable to residents and always willing to help. Vernon had been Chair of Audit and Governance Committee and was an expert on flooding, having suffered personally in 2007. He continued to serve as a County Councillor and was the 'go to' for highway matters in that role. This award was hugely deserved and he wished him well. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman Vernon Smith thanked those present for the tremendous honour which he appreciated very much. He

echoed previous comments regarding the professionalism of the Borough Council and had greatly enjoyed his time with the authority. He was delighted to see some old faces this evening, but also many new ones, and his one piece of advice to them all was to listen to one another and work together to achieve the best outcomes for the communities they served. Tewkesbury Borough was a fantastic place to live and he was proud to have served as a Borough Councillor.

- 63.12 Councillor Vines expressed what a pleasure it was to speak in support of Philip Surman. Philip had represented Shurdington for 22 years and was one of the best Councillors he could recall. He was a man of few words but full of wisdom – he did not feel the need to speak on every subject so, when he did, it was relevant and carried a lot of weight. Anyone looking for an example of how to be a proper Councillor could look to Philip as a role model. Philip had been elected as Mayor in 2012 which had coincided with the late Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics being hosted in London so he had been fortunate enough to represent Tewkesbury Borough at additional functions in relation to those events. He had spent a lot of his time on Planning Committee but his real gift was as Chair of Standards Committee which had benefited from his integrity and knowledge. He admired and missed him greatly – he was a terrific Councillor and friend and this was a well-deserved award. On receiving his certificate, Honorary Alderman Philip Surman indicated that he could honestly say that he had thoroughly enjoyed his 22 years as a Borough Councillor. He had made good friends and acquaintances during that time and had taken away many fond memories. He made particular mention to the Democratic Services team who had been a constant support to him over that period.
- 63.13 At the conclusion of the presentations, the Mayor congratulated the new Honorary Aldermen and indicated that, following the close of the meeting, all were welcome to join him at a reception in the foyer.

The meeting closed at 6:35 pm