

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL****SPECIAL COUNCIL  
MINUTES****Date: Tuesday 28 February 2017****Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage**

Present: The Mayor (J Lloyd CC), D Bainbridge, P Bibby, L Briscoe, R Broom, J Brown, H Burrell, L Chester, E Connolly, M Downing, J Fraser, J Gardner, M Gardner, S Hearn, R Henry CC, J Hollywell, C Latif, G Lawrence, Mrs J Lloyd, M McKay, L Martin-Haugh, J Mead, S Mead, A Mitchell, M Notley, R Parker CC, R Raynor, C Saunders, G Snell, S Speller, S Taylor OBE CC, P Stuart, J Thomas and A Webb

In Attendance: Emma Chapman - Stevenage Youth Mayor

Start/End Time: Start Time: 8.10 p.m.  
End Time: 8.30 p.m.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Cullen, L Harrington, M Hurst and A McGuinness.

There were no declarations of interests.

**2. FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH**

The special meeting had been convened for the purposes of considering a motion to confer posthumously the Honorary Freedom of Stevenage on Councillor Sherma Batson MBE DL CC, in recognition of her eminent services to the Council and the Community of Stevenage.

Councillor Sharon Taylor in moving the motion paid tribute to Sherma's life work which reflected the values of the Town and that she was an advocate and promoter of local democracy particularly with her work with the Schools Parliament. Councillor Taylor informed the meeting that during her service to the Town, not only had Sherma represented the residents of the Roebuck Ward but she had also served as a County Councillor and had been recognised by the Queen with the award of her MBE and being made Deputy Lieutenant. In conclusion Councillor Taylor stated that Sherma had made a unique contribution to Stevenage and had made a real difference to the Town.

Councillor John Gardner formally seconded the Motion and stated that it had been a privilege to work with Sherma and stated that all of her charities including the Stevenage Recycling Centre and the World Forum must be supported to continue the good work started by her. Councillor Gardner paid tribute to Sherma as the Town's first black woman Mayor and the first black citizen to be awarded Freedom of the Borough.

Councillor James Fraser spoke in support of the Motion. He paid tribute to the work of Sherma as a Councillor and also as a friend to all Members.

It was then **RESOLVED** that in accordance with the provisions of the Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, this Council, in pursuance of its powers under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act, 1972, confer posthumously the Honorary Freedom of Stevenage on Councillor Sherma Batson MBE DL CC in recognition of her eminent services to the Council and the Community of Stevenage.

**Mayor**