

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 15 September 2022

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Margaret Notley (Mayor), Myla Arceno (Deputy Mayor), Julie Ashley-Wren, Sandra Barr, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Nazmin Chowdhury, Michael Downing, Bret Facey, Alex Farquharson, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Andy McGuinness, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Loraine Rossati, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Sharon Taylor OBE CC and Anne Wells

Start / End Start Time: 7.00pm
Time: End Time: 7.55pm

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Phil Bibby CC, Rob Broom, Jim Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Matt Creasey, John Duncan, John Gardner, Liz Harrington, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence CC, Lin Martin-Haugh, Jeannette Thomas and Tom Wren.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MEMORIAL - HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

The Mayor advised Members that she had the great honour of reading out the proclamation on the accession of His Majesty King Charles III at a ceremony held in the Town Centre on Sunday 11 September.

The Mayor had since written to the Private Secretary to His Majesty the King on behalf of the people of the town to offer my sincere condolences to the King and his family on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Mayor then invited Members to a National Moment of Reflection on the life of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on Sunday, 18 September at 8.00pm on the Joyride Platform in the Town Square.

The Mayor then spoke of her memories of the Queen visiting Stevenage including her visit to Stevenage on 14th June 2012 to open the new maternity unit at The Lister Hospital.

The Mayor expressed her deepest condolences to The Royal Family, a difficult time for a family in mourning, who had lost both prominent members, Her Majesty the

Queen and only last year, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The Mayor then invited Members to pay tribute to the life and reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Councillor Sharon Taylor, Leader of the Council began by thanking the Officers of the Council for pulling together a number of events relating to the passing of Her Majesty the Queen at very short notice including the Proclamation event on 11 September. Councillor Taylor also thanked the Mayor for leading the mourning and the proclamation event with great compassion.

Councillor Taylor spoke of the Queen carrying out her duties with dignity and grace to the Country but also to the Commonwealth and the rest of the World.

The Leader reminded Members of the visits the Queen had made to Stevenage including to residents in their New Town home in Wigram Way and the Town Centre in 1959. She also opened the Research Centre at Glaxo in 1995 and in 2003 the new North Herts College.

The Leader expressed her deepest and heartfelt condolences to King Charles who had taken on the heavy burden of the Monarchy whilst dealing with his grief in losing his Mother. Cllr Taylor hoped that the outpouring of love and respect for the Queen had been consoling for the new King and his family in these difficult and momentous days. She hoped that the King would take the opportunity to make an early visit to Stevenage to see how the Town had changed since the Queens early visit in 1959.

Councillor Robin Parker, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, spoke of Queen Elizabeth as a constant presence in all our lives, and that her devotion to the role did our nation proud. The Queen had experienced tragedies and triumphs throughout her reign but constancy had been her hallmark and she had carried out her duties with grace, commitment and charm.

Councillor Stephen Booth spoke of the loss of the Queen. He spoke of his memories as a child being visited in hospital by Princess Elizabeth and then thanked the Queen for being a unified force in an often divided nation.

Councillor Speller shared a few reflections including his early memories of the Queen during his years as a child in Nigeria during a Royal Tour. The Queen represented modern Britain. Councillor Speller advised that he was privileged to have succeeded former Councillor John Lloyd as the Town's Armed Forces Covenant Champion and advised that the Military loved the Queen as much as she loved them.

Councillor Downing remembered as a child the news that the King had died and a few days later he had been taken to see the King lying in State in Westminster Hall. He recognised the personal role of the Queen in ensuring change in Ireland and was pleased to share this moment with colleagues.

Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd spoke of her first memories of seeing the Queen on her Coronation Day. She then spoke of the events where she had been presented to the

Queen, firstly at Glaxo then at the opening of the Maternity Unity at the Lister Hospital.

Councillor Hollywell paid tribute to the Queen's dignity and integrity in carrying out her role as Head of State so well, particularly in the early days as a lone woman amongst men. She was a woman of great faith and peace wanting to bring harmony to people and bring them together.

Councillor Snell expressed his deep regard and respect for Queen Elizabeth. He spoke of his deep affection and respect for the Queen and the wider Royal Family and the role they played in the country's constitution.

Councillor Barr spoke of her memory of attending the Royal Garden Party in terrible weather and the Queen being there to greet everybody and doing her duty in the rain. As a previous Mayor of the Town, Cllr Barr spoke of the honour and privilege in representing the Queen in this role.

Councillor Facey said that the Queen had left a definite and long lasting legacy. He was sure in their grief, the Royal Family had taken comfort in the outpouring of love from the Public. Cllr Facey advised that he and his ward colleagues would be writing to the new King to invite him to visit Stevenage and specifically to follow in the Queen's footsteps to visit the Longmeadow Ward.

Councillor Taylor thanked all the Members who had spoken for their tributes, memories and reflections to the Queen and said that this was testament to Her Majesty's ability and power to bring people together and mourn in unity.

The Mayor then thanked all those present for their heartfelt contributions that had been made at the meeting.

CHAIR