

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 22 July 2008

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Mick Patston (Mayor), John Lloyd, CC (Deputy Mayor), Sherma Batson, MBE, CC, Laurie Chester, Bob Clark, Dilys Clark, Graham Clark, Michael Downing, CC, James Fraser, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jacqueline Hollywell, Matthew Hurst, David Kissane, Carol Latif, Joan Lloyd, Sue Myson, Margaret Notley, Ralph Raynor, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Lilian Strange, Pam Stuart, Sharon Taylor, CC, Jeannette Thomas, Brian Underwood, Vickie Warwick and Ann Webb.

Agenda Item:

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In Attendance:

Baroness Williams, Freeman of the Borough, Honorary Alderman Brian Hall, Freeman of the Borough, Hilda Lawrence, Freeman of the Borough and Honorary Alderman Ken Vale.

Start/End Time:

Start Time: 7.00 pm

End Time: 8.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Howard Burrell, Monika Cherney-Craw, Dave Cullen, CC, Pam Gallagher, Liz Harrington, Lis Knight, Lin Martin-Haugh, Robin Parker, CC and Barbara Follett MP.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 CONFERRING THE TITLE - HONORARY ALDERMAN

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting which had been convened to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on William Luke Lawrence.

The Mayor began the meeting by advising Council of the sad news that Councillor Reg Smith, MBE, DL had passed away. The Mayor stated that his thoughts were with Reg's wife Val and his family and that he would miss him greatly. He added that as this news was very recent, he would ensure that there was an opportunity for Members to pay tribute to their colleague at the next Council meeting. Council then stood for a moment to remember Reg with a minute's silence.

The Mayor then reported that at an Extraordinary meeting of the Council on 21 May 2008, Stevenage Borough Council passed the following resolution:

" That in accordance with the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, this Council confers the title of Honorary Alderman on Bill Lawrence who has rendered eminent services to the Council serving for over 38 years as an elected Member."

Before presenting Bill Lawrence with his Title and Badge of Office, the Mayor called upon several people to pay tribute to him.

Councillor Sharon Taylor, Leader of the Council began by congratulating Bill for his achievement and spoke about his length of service with Stevenage both as an Urban District Councillor, a Borough Councillor and also twice being elected Mayor of Stevenage.

The Leader focussed on Bill's services to Stevenage particularly as Chair of the Leisure Committee and also as a founder Member of the Stevenage Sports Council and Sports Trust.

The Leader then read out a letter of tribute to Bill from Barbara Follett, MP who was unable to be at the meeting. Barbara congratulated Bill on his distinguished career and the contribution he had made to Stevenage as a most devoted public servant. She also spoke about Bill's wife Hilda who had previously been honoured for her services to Stevenage, and stated that together Bill and Hilda had been great champions for the Town.

The Mayor then invited Baroness Shirley Williams, Freeman of the Borough to say a few words. Baroness Williams firstly paid tribute to Councillor Reg Smith as she would not be at the next meeting of Council. Baroness Williams referred to Councillor Smith as a man of spirit and courage who would be greatly missed by many.

Baroness Williams then went on to say that she was very pleased to have been invited to this meeting to honour Bill Lawrence who in her opinion was one of the forefathers of the Town. Along with his wife Hilda, Bill had spent many years battling for the residents of Stevenage and was a tremendous supporter in particular for young people in the areas of sport and the arts. Baroness Williams advised that she was pleased to have been Bill and Hilda's friend for over 40 years.

Honorary Alderman, Brian Hall then paid tribute to Bill Lawrence. Alderman Hall said that he had first come to Stevenage after he had seen a television programme with Bill Lawrence talking about the benefits of living in a new town. Alderman Hall said that the people of Stevenage owed a great deal to Bill particularly for improvements to the leisure provision in the Town, with the opening of the Swimming Pool and the Leisure Centre and also regaining the lease of the Stevenage Football Ground.

Honorary Alderman Ken Vale then spoke about the strong friendship he had formed with Bill over the years they had worked together. He congratulated Bill on his award and thanked him for all he had done for the Town.

Hilda Lawrence then spoke of her and Bill's life together and thanked the Council for the honour given to her husband.

Following these speeches, a number of Council Members spoke in tribute.

At this point Bill Lawrence was invited to read aloud and sign the Acceptance of Title. The Mayor then countersigned the declaration and presented him with a framed certificate and his Badge of Office.

The Mayor presented Hilda Lawrence with flowers as a mark of thanks for her great support to Bill.

In response, Bill briefly acknowledged the Honour and addressed the Council meeting.

On behalf of his Father, Paul Lawrence thanked the Council for the Honour he had been awarded. In particular Bill thanked former Council officer Don Hills for his support and friendship over many years, Grahame Bowles and Eddie Messent for their work on the Sports Council, Honorary Alderman Brian Hall for all he had achieved for the Town and his wife Hilda and their family for their support all the way through his time on the Council.

All present were then invited by the Mayor to join him for a reception for the new Honorary Alderman.