

**NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**26<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

An Extraordinary meeting of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall Nuneaton.

**Present**

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor J. Clarke)

Councillors, R. Baxter-Payne, D. Brown, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, S. Harbison, J. Hartshorn, L. Hocking, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, S. Markham, B. Pandher, N. Phillips, J. Sheppard, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, and K. Wilson

**Apologies** were received from Councillors B. Beetham, K Evans, M. Rudkin, T. Sheppard, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, H. Walmsley

CL51 **Declarations of Interests**

**RESOLVED** that the Declarations of Interests for this meeting are as set out in the schedule attached to these minutes.

CL52 **Announcements**

Councillor K. Wilson, Leader of the Council made the following statement to full council and members of the public on the recycling bin strike:

“Mr Deputy Mayor, with permission I would like to make a statement to Full Council about the current recycling bin strike that we are facing. I feel it is important to take this opportunity to give an update to all members – and the public.

This is the earliest chance that I have had to inform Council. It may seem like a novel concept in this chamber for a Cabinet member to do this, but as I have said many times – this Council is more open and transparent under this new Conservative administration.

As members will be aware, there is presently a strike between Unite the Union and Coventry City Council over their pay and term and conditions. I would like to emphasise that this is a dispute between Coventry Council and their employees, and their dispute has nothing to do with the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth. Yet we are affected by the continuing strike. That is because our recycling collection was contracted out by the last Labour council to Coventry City Council with no competitive tendering process.

I would like to say from the outset that I wish to express my thanks to those drivers and binmen from Coventry who have been coming over to Nuneaton and Bedworth and doing the job that they are paid to do. The dispute is

mainly with the HGV drivers, and I am aware that there are potentially more binmen who would like to come over and complete their daily job for Nuneaton and Bedworth but are prevented from doing so by striking drivers. Thanks to those men and women who have continued to do their job, it means that approximately two-thirds of recycling rounds are being completed on any given day. This means that we have one third which are not. Initially the strike was scheduled to be on odd days in January, and into February and March. Unite the Union have now escalated their action into all out disruption for the next 2 months. It is my understanding, Mr Deputy Mayor, that Unite the Union have so far refused to go to arbitration through ACAS. I have to wonder that if Unite is so convinced of the merits of its case why it has refused. I suspect they know the answer, and it would not be favourable to them.

The strikers are demanding pay rises beyond the financial ability of Coventry City Council and would break equal pay legislation. It would also put additional financial pressure on key priority services like adult social care and vulnerable children.

They claim they are on "poverty pay". Yet, according to their Council, the average wage of a HGV driver is £34,000 with some reaching as much as £54,000. The union disputes this, but given that Coventry City pay the wages, I would suspect the Council know what their pay bill is.

£34,000 Mr Deputy Mayor. I would not class that as poverty pay. That is a wage that many of our residents in Nuneaton and Bedworth can only dream and aspire to. I certainly know that I for one don't earn anywhere near that sort of salary. I'm afraid that the strikers are significantly divorced from reality over this.

They have a pay deal on the table to amend their contract to 52-weeks a year rather than 51. When I go to work, Mr Deputy Mayor, I – and I suspect most other people in our Borough – have a 52 week contract. They have been offered £3,500 – tax free – to buy out their contract. And there is also an offer of £1,300 for the lowest paid workers as a pay increase. To me that seems like a perfectly reasonable deal.

Of course, whilst they are on strike the strikers will not be paid. If they are supposedly on poverty pay, I am forced to wonder how they can afford to live with no pay for 2 months.

Whilst this issue remains unresolved Coventry residents are suffering. And our residents here in Nuneaton and Bedworth are being hit hard too. I can assure Council that this Conservative administration takes this issue extremely seriously. As Leader, I have implemented an Emergency Cabinet Sub-Committee that meets every Monday with the leading officers to discuss the progress of the Coventry strike and the actions that we can take ourselves to deal with the worst effects.

The solutions are not ideal and are considerably complicated further by the legislation surrounding strikes. It would appear that the law provides more protection to the unions than it does to innocent taxpayers of Nuneaton and Bedworth.

I have instructed that where a recycling bin has not been collected, if a resident puts their recycling in a bin liner at the side of their bin on the next black bin collection day that this will be collected by either our waste operatives or an additional van and staff that we are allocating to collect the additional waste. This is a temporary measure for the duration of the strike only and is a perfectly reasonable management request to our staff during these emergency times.

Secondly, we are in the process of obtaining permission from the Environment Agency for emergency permits to have deposit sites at three locations in our Borough for residents to bring their recycling if they can. When these sites are operational, I would ask that residents who are able to drop off their recycling at these sites do so as this means that our black waste operatives can complete their normal rounds as quickly as possible. But where residents are unable to do so we will work to maintain the additional collections with the black bin. I am certainly not going to give ludicrous advice, as appears to be the case in Coventry, that you can cycle with your waste to one of the drop-off sites.

Mr Deputy Mayor, we are working hard to limit the impact of the strike between Unite the Union and Coventry City Council on our Borough. It will undoubtedly place an additional financial burden on this Council. We would appear to be collateral damage to the unions in this dispute. The costs to us are yet to be assessed and worked out fully.

But I can confirm that we will only be paying Coventry City Council for work that is completed under the contract, and not the normal value of the contract. We will pay what we owe for services rendered, and not a penny more. In closing, Mr Deputy Mayor, I would like to reiterate my thanks to those Coventry workers who are continuing to turn up to work and are providing a service to our residents. To me, that highlights the best of what local councils and public service do for our residents.

This Conservative administration is doing everything we possible can within the law to defend the interests of our residents. We have no say in this dispute. If the Trade Unions are so sure of the righteousness of their case and their argument, then they should sit down with the arbitrators and test it. Causing misery to the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth – and, indeed, Coventry – is neither fair nor proportionate.

I make this plea to the strikers. The offer you have is reasonable and far more than most of your affected communities are getting. Please, take the pay rise that you have been offered and serve the communities you are employed to support.”

#### CL53 **Public Participation**

##### **Question 1 - Public**

**Mr Sam Margrave submitted the following question of Councillor K. Wilson, Leader of the Council:**

This meeting is being held in secret using the exclusion of the public and press.

But you have criticised decisions being made behind closed doors in the past and promises a new era of transparency.

Is it a legal requirement to hold this meeting excluding the public and press, or a choice by Councillors to creep back in to old ways that saw secret meetings at the Town hall for decades, and if it is not a legal requirement for Councillors to exclude the public and press, and Councillors have a choice whether to be open and transparent or have a culture of taking decisions behind closed doors - will you choose to allow the public to stay and see the debate and be open about reasons for your decisions and commit not to create a culture that hides things from local people whether it be this Council meeting, Standards Committee, the Borough Plan or decisions about senior appointments, spending tax payers money or other decisions you make in the name of the public, so we can see what you are upto and have continued trust in this new council which is doing new things?"

**The Leader of the Council, Councillor K. Wilson responded as follows:**

We are absolutely on this side of the chamber a transparent administration and I think that the statement I gave just a few moments ago would evidence the fact that we are doing things differently and we are putting information out there to the residents and being as open and transparent as we can be.

However the item we are considering is the appointment of a S151 officer, this is not a generally point of policy or principle, this is a specific individuals employment, they are not even technically our employee yet and neither I nor I suspect Mr Margrave would want the details of their employment contract or employment offers broadcast out there for all an sundry to see that isn't fair nor is it (to turn a coin of phrase) playing cricket.

I believe that it is only fair and proportionate when dealing with an individual's contract of employment we consider it carefully and confidentially because it could have wide ranging ramifications for their employment now and future job prospects further down the line because I am not going to presuppose the outcome of the debate later on. It is I can confirm an absolute requirement to do so to have this in confidential session and wherever possible we try to have things out in the open as for other committees that is another matter for those committees to decide based on the merits of the case before them but this is absolutely Mr Deputy Mayor a more open, transparent and democratic council under this new leadership.

**CL54 Exclusion of Public and Press**

**RESOLVED** that under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph (i) and (iv) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CL55 **Appointment of S151 Officer**

A report of the Chief Executive was presented to full council for consideration to appoint a S151 Officer.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) subject to completion of all appropriate pre-employment checks, the appointment of VS to the post of Director - Finance & Enterprise and Section 151 Officer be confirmed; and
- b) the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to make a formal offer of employment and agree the start date for VS to commence her role.

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Mayor

## Council - Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2021/2022

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
	General dispensations granted to all members under s.33 of the Localism Act 2011			Granted to all members of the Council in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing matters</li> <li>- Statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992</li> <li>- An allowance, payment given to members</li> <li>- An indemnity given to members</li> <li>- Any ceremonial honour given to members</li> <li>- Setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992</li> <li>- Planning and Licensing matters</li> <li>- Allotments</li> <li>- Local Enterprise Partnership</li> </ul>
	R. Baxter-Payne	Manager Brinklow Quarry Ltd, Brinklow; County Councillor - WCC	Spouse: Self-employed childminder	
	B. Beetham	Employed at The George Eliot Hospital; Warwickshire County Council – Camp Hill	Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board</li> <li>• Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground</li> </ul>	
	D. Brown	Employed by H.M Land Registry	Regional Coordinator, Ragdoll Rescue Charity.  Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhall Education Foundation;</li> <li>• Warwickshire Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee;</li> <li>• NBBC Biodiversity Champion</li> </ul>	
	J. Clarke	Employed by Marcus Jones MP	County Councillor W.C.C.  Nuneaton Conservative Association; Deputy Chairman	
	T. Cooper	None	Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board</li> </ul>	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground</li> </ul>	
	S. Croft	Employed at Holland & Barrett Retail Ltd	Treasurer of the Conservative Association Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion for Safeguarding (Children and Adults)</li> <li>Local Government Superannuation Scheme Consultative Board</li> <li>West Midlands Employers</li> </ul>	
	L. Cvetkovic	Head of Geography (Teacher), Sidney Stringer Academy, Coventry	The Bulkington Volunteers (Founder); Bulkington Sports and Social Club (Trustee)  Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Control Partnership Steering Group</li> </ul>	
	L. Downs	River Bars Limited; Coventry Plus Beyond the Plane	NBBC representative on the Armed Forces Covenant Meeting	
	K. Evans	Employed by UK Parliament	Sponsorship: Election Expenses – North Warwickshire Conservative Association  Membership of Other Bodies: West Midlands Combined Authority Audit Committee.  Executive Officer – North Warwickshire Conservative Association; Member of the Conservative and Unionist Party; Member of the Governing Body – Race Leys Infant School	
	C. Golby		Member of Warwickshire County Council  Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley and Bosworth Joint Committee</li> </ul>	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Leaders</li> <li>• Local Enterprise Partnership</li> <li>• Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd. (NABCEL)</li> <li>• Nuneaton and Bedworth Home Improvement Agency</li> <li>• NBBC representative on the George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust – Public/User Board</li> <li>• NBBC representative on George Eliot Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Governors</li> </ul>	
	J. Gutteridge		Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board</li> <li>• Age UK (Warwickshire Branch)</li> </ul>	
	B. Hammersley	County Councillor – W.C.C.	Member of NABCEL	
	S. Harbison	Employed by Meridian c/o Hello Fresh, 1 St Georges Way, Nuneaton	Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor's Piece Charity</li> <li>• Astley Charity</li> </ul>	
	J. Hartshorn	Employed by Nuneaton Library – Digital Inclusion – WCC (Senior Customer Service Assistant) COVID Community Testing – WCC – Team Leader (Casual)	Member of Nuneaton Conservatives	
	L. Hocking	Employed by Openreach	Member of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unite the Union</li> <li>• Communication Workers Union</li> </ul>	
	J. Kennaugh	County Councillor W.C.C.  Employed by UK	Member of the W.C.C. Regulatory Committee Member of the Conservative Party	



	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
		Flooring Direct Ltd.	Member of UNITE the Union Nuneaton and Bedworth representative for the Equality and Inclusion Partnership NBBC Representative on Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership	
	K.A. Kondakor	Electronic Design Engineer (self-employed semi-retired); Statistical data analyst and expert witness (self employed)	Unpaid director of 100PERCENTRENEWABLEUK LTD	
	A. Llewellyn-Nash	Employee of BMI Healthcare	Treasurer of Exhall Multi-cultural Group  Governor at Newdigate Primary and Nursery School, Bedworth  Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospice Charity</li> </ul>	
	S. Markham	County Councillor – W.C.C.	Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bedworth Neighbourhood Watch</li> <li>• Governor at Ash Green School</li> <li>• Sherbourne Asset Co Shareholder Committee;</li> <li>• Nuneaton and Bedworth Sports Forum;</li> <li>• Warwickshire Direct Partnership;</li> <li>• Warwickshire Waste Partnership;</li> </ul>	
	B. Pandher		Member of Warwickshire County Council  Treasurer & Trustee of Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh Temple; Coordinator of Council of Sikh Temples in Coventry; Secretary of Coventry Indian Community; Trustee of Sikh Monument Trust Vice Chair Exhall Multicultural Group  Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foleshill Charity Trustee – Proffitt's Charity</li> </ul>	
	N. Phillips	Employee of DWP	Member of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuneaton Labour CLP</li> </ul>	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fabian Society</li> <li>• The George Eliot Society</li> <li>• The PCS Union</li> <li>• Central Credit Union</li> <li>• Stockingford Sports and Allotment Club</li> <li>• Haunchwood Sports and Social Club</li> </ul>	
	M. Rudkin	Employee of Coventry City Council	Unite the Union	
	A. Sargeant	Employed by Pertemps	<p>Chairman of The Nook (Nuneaton) Residents Association. Member of Nuneaton Carnival Committee.</p> <p>Representative on the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice Rights</li> </ul>	
	J. Sargeant	Head of Retail – Life Charity		
	J. Sheppard		<p>Partnership member of the Hill Top and Caldwell Big Local.</p> <p>Director of Wembrook Community Centre.</p> <p>Member of the Management Committee at the Mental Health Drop in.</p>	<p>Dispensation to speak and vote on any matters of Borough Plan that relate to the Directorship of Wembrook Community Centre</p>
	T. Sheppard	Employee of Dairy Crest		
	J. Singh			
	R. Smith		<p>Chairman of Volunteer Friends, Bulkington; Trustee of Bulkington Sports and Social Club;</p> <p>Member of the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A5 Member Partnership;</li> <li>• Patrol (Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside of London) Joint Committee;</li> <li>• Building Control Partnership Steering Group</li> <li>• Bulkington Village</li> </ul>	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			Community and Conference Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative on the Nuneaton and Bedworth Older Peoples Forum</li> <li>• Digital Infrastructure Board</li> </ul>	
	M. Tromans	RTC Ltd, Nuneaton; WCC, Warwick	Nuneaton Acorns WI	
	R. Tromans	RTC, Nuneaton AFL, Wellingborough	W.C.C. Warwick  Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuneaton Neighbourhood Watch Committee</li> <li>• Nuneaton Festival of Arts</li> </ul>	
	H. Walmsley	Chief of Staff to Julian Knight MP	Chartered Institute of Public Relations  Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship Project for Children</li> <li>• West Midlands Combined Authority Audit Group</li> </ul>	Dispensation to speak and vote
	M. Walsh	Employed by MacInnes Tooling Ltd. – UK Sales Manager		
	C.M. Watkins	Landlord of a privately rented property	Representative on the following outside bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd. (NABCEL)</li> </ul>	
	K.D. Wilson	Acting Delivery Manager, Nuneaton and Warwick County Courts, HMCTS, Warwickshire Justice Centre, Nuneaton	Nuneaton Conservative Association  Corporate Tenancies: properties are leased by NBBC to Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd, of which I am a Council appointed Director.  Representative on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd (NABCEL)</li> <li>• Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Joint Committee</li> <li>• District Council Network</li> <li>• Local Government</li> </ul>	

	<b>Name of Councillor</b>	<b>Disclosable Pecuniary Interest</b>	<b>Other Personal Interest</b>	<b>Dispensation</b>
			Association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd (CWLEP)</li> <li>• West Midlands Combined Authority</li> <li>• Deputy Chairman – Nuneaton Conservative Association</li> <li>• District Council Network</li> <li>• Local Government Association</li> </ul>	