

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,  
KIDDERMINSTER**

**22ND OCTOBER 2019 (6PM)**

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**Present:**

Councillors: S Miah (Chairman), P W M Young (Vice-Chairman), ,  
G W Ballinger, J F Byng, S J Chambers, A Coleman, R H Coleman,  
B S Dawes, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, C E E Edginton-White,  
S Griffiths, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, L J Jones,  
N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers,  
D R Sheppard, J W R Thomas and L Whitehouse.

**C.53**

**Minute's silence**

The Chairman referred to the recent death of Charles Talbot MBE, whom he described as a true gentleman and who was a former member of the Council. The Council stood to observe a minute's silence in memory of him.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Aston, C J Barnett, V Caulfield, N Gale, A L L'Huillier, S E N Rook and A Totty.

**C.54**

**Declarations of Interests by Members**

There were no declarations of interest.

**C.55**

**Conferment of Title of Honorary Alderman**

On the recommendation of Cabinet at its meeting on 16th July 2019 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman upon former District Councillor:

**Stephen Williams**

in recognition of his outstanding service to the authority and the local community over many years, Councillor M J Hart, Leader of the Conservative Group, moved that:

- (a) Pursuant to Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the honour and title of "Honorary Alderman" be bestowed on Stephen Williams in

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grateful recognition of his eminent and distinguished service rendered to Wyre Forest Rural Ward and Wyre Forest District Council over 20 years elected service.

- (b) The common seal of the Council be affixed to a scroll conferring the title of Honorary Alderman upon Stephen Williams.
- (c) A Badge of Office and scroll be presented to Stephen Williams.

Councillor Hart said that he expected there would be unanimous support for the proposal. He had met Stephen Williams in 2002 and it had been an honour and privilege to have served with him since. Councillor Hart outlined Councillor Williams' electoral history, having first been elected in a by-election on 18 February 1999 with 88% share of the vote. Councillor Williams initially served Chaddesley before the ward was expanded to Blakedown and Chaddesley and in 2015 Wyre Forest Rural, where they had been fellow ward councillors. Councillor Williams had served as Chairman of the Council on four occasions but his passion had been planning. Councillor Hart expressed thanks to Councillor Williams for this service and to Christine, his wife, for the support in his role as Chairman.

Councillor F M Oborski MBE, Leader of the Independent, Liberal Democrat and Green Group, said she was delighted to second the proposal. Councillor Williams had been a superb Chairman of the Council and excellent chairman of the Planning Committee – indeed he had been a fantastic “serial chairman”. During his service, Chaddesley Corbett had adopted the first neighbourhood plan in the district, and to many people Councillor Williams was “Mr Chaddesley Corbett”. He had been unfailingly polite, charming and fair.

Councillor Ballinger, Leader of the Independent Community Health Concern Group and the Leader of the Council, supported the proposal. Councillor Williams had worked tirelessly for the Council and community for many years, and had been a great servant of the Council.

Councillor Whitehouse, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, said that he had not served alongside Councillor Williams but was pleased to report tributes from former Labour councillors. There was the highest regard for Councillor Williams' role as chairman and he was noted for his integrity and impartiality. Councillor Whitehouse said that the Labour Group fully supported the recommendation.

Councillor Hardiman said that Councillor Williams and he had both been educated at Sladen Secondary School and worked in the carpet industry. He had been privileged to know him since he first became involved in politics and to have served alongside Councillor Williams as a friend.

Councillor Desmond said that Councillor Williams thoroughly deserved the honour, and in his opinion had not changed in the 17 years that he had worked alongside him: he was an absolute gentleman.

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On behalf of the staff of the Council, the Chief Executive drew a comparison with Stentor, a herald of the Greeks at Troy, whose voice was as loud as that of fifty other men together. Councillor Williams was not quite that loud but might be described as stentorian and “brazen-voiced” in chairing meetings of the Council. He had twice had the pleasure of serving under Councillor Williams’ firm but calm chairmanship. Other managers and staff could attest to his distinguished role as chairman of the Planning Committee for many years – two former heads of development management were present, and the present development manager had extended his special apologies for absence. The Chief Executive congratulated Councillor Williams on the singular honour that Council had been invited to bestow upon him: it was richly deserved.

Having put the motion to Council, the Chairman declared that it had been **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### C.56

The Chairman presented Honorary Alderman Williams with his Badge of Office and a scroll, and invited him to address the Council.

Honorary Alderman Williams thanked the Council for appointing him as Honorary Alderman. He had been somewhat hesitant to accept the honour, give the distinguished service to the Council of other Honorary Aldermen.

He thanked Chris, his wife, for her support over 53 years and also his family. He extended thanks to those who had served as his Vice Chairmen, and to friends and others who had helped him with fund raising for charities. He especially wished to mention Councillor Parsons, Mayor of Pershore for the ninth time, who was present with his wife.

Honorary Alderman Williams extended thanks to officers, particularly those in the development management team and the planning solicitor; and finally to the proposer and seconder of the motion and to his former colleagues for supporting it. He reaffirmed that he would be a good ambassador for the Council and Wyre Forest.

The Chairman invited Honorary Alderman Williams, Members, Officers and guests to a reception, following a short programme of entertainment by the Wyre Choir (of whom the Honorary Alderman was a member), and declared the special meeting closed at 6.31p.m.