

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Full Council

Friday, 12 July 2024 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present:

S Sivaramiah (Mayor)

J Hart (Deputy Mayor)

O Adeniyi, M L Ayling, E Barrott, T Bidwell, C M Burke, B J Burgess, S Bushnell, D Crow, H Hellier, N Hilton, K L Jaggard, G S Jhans, M G Jones, I Khan, K Khan, Y Khan, P K Lamb, R A Lanzer, T Lunnon, C J Mullins, S Mullins, M Mwangi, A Nawaz, D Patel, S Pritchard, D Ramsay, T Rana and B Yianni

Also in Attendance:

Mr Peter Nicolson (Independent Person)

Officers Present:

Siraj Choudhury Head of Governance, People & Performance

Ian Duke Chief Executive

Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer

Chris Pedlow Democracy & Data Manager

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor I Ashraf, J Charatan, I T Irvine and B Noyce

Mr Russell Brown (Independent Person)

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Admission of Richard David Burrett as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough

It was moved by Councillor Crow, seconded by Councillor Lanzer

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That, in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do admit Richard David Burrett to be an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Crawley, most honourable distinction which is the privilege of the Council to bestow in appreciation and acknowledgement of the eminent services rendered by him to the Borough as a Councillor from 1992 to 2023, West Sussex County Councillor from 2009 until the present day, Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit Committee throughout the

existence of the Crawley Primary Care Trust from 2002 to 2006, Governor of Bewbush Middle School/Bewbush Primary School from 1996 to 2012 and Chair of the Governing Body from 2004 to 2012, Governor of Thomas Bennett Community College from 1997 to 2018 and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body from 2000 to 2012 and again from 2014 to 2017, Member of Crawley Crime Prevention Panel from 1986 to 2003 and Chairman from 1996 to 1999 and again from 2001 to 2003, Trustee of Crawley Open House from 1996 until the present day and Vice-Chair of the Trustees from 2003 to 2014 and Trustee of the Gatwick Airport Community Trust from 2013 until the present day and as an expression of the high esteem in which he is held by the Mayor, the Council and the people of the Town.

As well as Councillors Crow and Lanzer, Councillor Chris Mullins also paid tribute to Richard Burrett.

With the motion having been duly carried, Richard Burrett thereupon signed the Rolls of Honorary Freeman, with his signature being attested by the Mayor and Chief Executive.

On behalf of the Council and the people of Crawley, the Mayor then conveyed her congratulations to Richard Burrett, and presented him with a badge and scroll recoding his admission as an Honorary Freeman. Richard was also presented with his gift as a former Councillor.

Richard Burrett then addressed the Council and assembled guests, expressing his thanks for being honoured in this way. A copy of his speech can be found below:

Thank you very much, Madam Mayor. I mean, this is this is an amazing honour. It's brilliant. I mean I'm not lost for words because I've got a few things I want to say but it is brilliant and I want to thank everybody here for their support both over the years and also tonight with this honour, and I will say particular thank you to Hayley for all the support she's given in organising this event over the last few months and before anybody asks, when they see what was listed in the booklet the citation, and so on, and the scroll, she did send it to me to proofread beforehand because she knew otherwise I'd find something in it that wasn't right!

I really appreciate the comments made by my colleagues Councillors Crow, Lanzer and Mullins. And I had to laugh at Chris's comment about things coming back in the future because it actually reminded me of an old friend of mine from outside of politics who always says that if he, ever writes his autobiography, he will employ me as the ghostwriter because I remember so much of what happened when we were all younger.

This is an amazing honour, but I just wanted to say and just spend a few minutes just talking about the different organisations that I've been part of in Crawley over the last few years because to be an honorary freeman of the borough is not just about being a councillor, it's about the other things that we do as well and I suppose I just wanted to pay tribute to those organisations and just to say a little bit about how I got involved.

I was interested in politics from a very early age. I was always scouring election results and that even right back in the late 70s, early 80s. But I suppose I perhaps didn't realise that party politics extended to local government. But in those days in the early 80s, we had a thing called the Civic News, which I suppose would be the equivalent of what we now call Crawley live. And one day, when I was about 11 or 12, one of those came through our door with a map of the town and pictures of all the councillors representing

the different wards and I thought that's interesting. And I then found out that actually Council meetings were open to the public and I cajoled my mother, who's sitting over there to take me along and sit up in the gallery with me when I was about 11 or 12 and watch one of these meetings and I was absolutely hooked. And so she got lumbered with that job for a few years until I was old enough that I could go and sit up and watch on my own and some of you who have been here a long time might even remember me as a teenager sitting up there until I got elected myself.

It says in the booklet, my first involvement in public life really was when I was 17 and I was a sixth former at Thomas Bennett Community College and the Crawley. Crime Prevention Panel, which existed in those days prior to the changes that came in via the Crime and Disorder Act, ran a seminar in the Civic Hall where is this building where it used to be, for 6th formers and each school was invited to send. At the end of the seminar we were asked if a couple of us from each school would like to join the Crime Prevention Panel as four members, and I said yes, I'd be interested. So I did that and I stayed a member from 1986 through to 2003, when it actually ceased to exist as a result of the changes to community safety under the Crime and Disorder Act. And of course it was on there that I first met Bender Smith, who actually served a term as chairman in the 1990s with me as her vice chairman. So we worked together, even then.

Then, of course, I went off to university, I did my politics degree. I came back to Crawley. But I wanted to get involved. Obviously more extensively locally and it happened that a seat came up in what was then. Pound Hill North Ward and I was invited to apply and I became a councillor and it went from there. And as you all know, up until May of last year, that was a 31-year commitment.

But there were other organisations that are mentioned here as well, I will mention Crawley Open House that started in 1996 when the late Alf Pegler, whose bust will be unveiled later this evening, approached me and said that there was a vacancy for a Council representative for Crawley Open House or the resources centre, as it was called then and would I be interested in doing that as I was on the Housing committee and interested in homelessness issues. So I said yes, and I went along and 28 years later I'm still there as a trustee. Similarly in 1996 I knew that I would probably or had a strong chance that I might not be re-elected after my first four-year term because my party was going through the sort of the sort of popularity issues that we have been in recent years and I was thinking, well, I would like to stay involved in local affairs and there other things I would do.

I was particularly interested in becoming a school governor. Particularly Thomas Bennett, which had been my alma mater, so to speak. And I remember speaking to Doug Mayne, who again many of you will know, the late Doug Mayne, the long serving borough and county councillor who was chair of governors there. I asked him if there was a seat on the governing body available. And he said well, not at the moment, but I'll keep my eye out for you. But actually he said. I always think it's better for people to become a governor of a primary school first and then to move on to do secondary governance, so, he said. If you like, I can nominate you and we do have a number of schools in Crawley where we're short of local authority governors and one of those was the then the Bewbush Middle School. So I became a governor there in 1996 and stayed on when it transferred into the new primary school, and actually I was asked to chair the temporary governing body that set that up and then became Chair of governors for eight years. Shortly after I joined Bewbush Middle School, a seat came up on the Thomas Bennett Community College. And again, Doug Mayne and the late Mary Russell, who again many of you here will

remember was a governor there for many years and was very prominent in the USA nominated me and I took up that post, which again I held for 21 years.

Then came along the changes to primary care and the introduction of primary care trusts. One of which was the Crawley PCCT and I applied for a post there as a non-executive director, which was only for a short time. Actually was only 4 ½ years until they were all reorganised and then something different happened, but again that really was something that really enthused me. I was chair of the audit committee. I spent a lot of time going into the detail of that as you can imagine and that set me in good stead for when we started having audit committees in local government.

Around about that time of course we took control of this Council and we were in control for eight years throughout that period, when Councillor Lanzer was leader. When I was a cabinet member and also towards the end of the period when our late colleague Howard Bloom took over as leader, I served as his deputy. And again during that period I realised a very long-standing ambition to become a county councillor. I went down to County Hall and held a number of roles. There, which has been said, committee chairman, cabinet member and latterly deputy leader and again now chairman of one committee and Vice chairman of another. I've thoroughly enjoyed that and whilst I'm no longer a member of this Council, I'm still a county councillor and hope to continue in that role because it is something that I absolutely love doing.

Finally the other organisation that's mentioned here is the Gatwick Airport Community Trust and that started in 2013 when my colleague Pieter Montyn, who's now chairman of the County Council, who's I'm pleased to see with us tonight, was Cabinet member for Highways and transport. And he asked me if I would like to represent West Sussex on GACT as we call it and I took up that role. I've been joined over the years by a number of other people from Crawley, like Brian Quinn, Atiz Nawaz Crawley Council representative, and that is a fascinating body to be a member of, because you're actually responsible for awarding grants across a large part of West Sussex, Surrey, East Sussex and Kent and you get to read and hear about the most amazing voluntary organisations across that whole area and the work that they do. Sadly, I probably won't be doing that for much longer because the new Section 106 arrangements are going to mean that funding is now going to community foundations to be distributed, so we'll probably only be doing it for another year or so. But it's been a brilliant opportunity again for me and all of these things have been just wonderful things to do. So many wonderful people. I've worked with and met. I did try to count up earlier how many other borough councillors I served with during the 31 years I was here, but I did it without having a bit of paper or computer in front of me off the top of my head. Twice I got over 100 and then I lost count and I thought, no, I'm gonna have to sit down and do this properly. But it was it was way over 100 and I think it'll probably be nearly 150, and of course three of those are the other three nominees who are sitting here this evening. Colin, who was there for well, from the for about the 1st 20 years that I was a Councillor, Brian who came along a bit later and again we were colleagues for 20 odd years and of course Brenda, who I've known for very many years as a as a colleague, an adversary and we have had our moments, but most of all, is a friend and a valued friend, and I'm, you know, I'm really, really pleased to see her here tonight. So once again, I've gone on for long enough. But you know, as Bob said, I'm not very good at executive summaries. And I know I ought to wind up because we've got Brian to come yet. So you know, he'll have a few words to say at some point, no doubt, but thank you all very much. It's a great honour. It means the world to me and you know it's the town I grew up in. It's the town I've always lived in. And it's the town I probably always will live in and will always be proud to live in. So thank you very much. And one final thing

I would say. When my former colleague, the late Alan Quine, was granted this honour some years ago, we did joke about the fact that that Freeman of the City of London are allowed to drive sheep over London Bridge. And we did joke about Alan driving sheep up Grattons Drive. Sadly that never happened. But maybe I should try and do that to emulate him and I'm looking across, I see my friends Chris and Janet Dunton in the gallery, so I might need to borrow a flock from you at some point, because obviously I don't have any of my own. But thank you all very much indeed.

3. Admission of Colin Christopher Lloyd as an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman of the Borough

It was moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Hilton

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That, in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do admit

Colin Christopher Lloyd to be an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Crawley, the most honourable distinctions which it is the privilege of the Council to bestow in appreciation and acknowledgement of the eminent services rendered by him to the Borough Council as a Councillor from Councillor from 1990 until 2008 and from 2010 until 2016, as a West Sussex County Councillor from 2001 until 2005 and a Governor for many years at both Desmond Anderson Primary School and Thomas Bennett Community College and as an expression of the high esteem in which he is held by the Mayor, the Council and the people of the Town.

As well as Councillors Jones and Hilton, Councillor Crow also paid tribute to Colin Lloyd.

With the motion having been duly carried, Colin Lloyd thereupon signed the rolls of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alterman, with his signatures being attested by the Mayor and Chief Executive.

On behalf of the Council and the people of Crawley. The Mayor then conveyed her congratulations to Colin Lloyd and presented to him a badge and scroll recording his admission as an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman.

Colin Lloyd then addressed the Council and then assembled guest and expressed his thanks for being honoured ins this way. A copy of his speech can be found below:

Yes, thank you. Madam Mayor, councillors and guests. It is so nice to be here with friends and family for this lovely occasion at the town hall. Actually, you've made a few changes around here in the last few years. It felt like a bit like coming into a new building and I hardly knew the place.

I am delighted to receive this special recognition from Crawley Borough Council for my service as a councillor. Thank you very much indeed. It's a great, great honour. Thank you. And I'd especially like to thank Councillors Jones, Hilton and Crow for their kind remarks tonight I was very moved. Thank you very much.

I've got many fond memories of my time here and going back as far as working pretty closely with three of the giants of local government in Crawley, that's Alf Pegler, Bert Crane and Tony Edwards. As well as obviously with former colleagues here tonight Richard, Brenda, and Brian and other councillors, present and former councillors. Great memories of working with them. And It's also so rewarding to have such regular contact with residents in Tilgate that's been mentioned tonight, and it is unusual for me to go to Tilgate, I don't live very far away from Tilgate now, but not see people I know and have a chat with and also in the wider community of Crawley as well. You know it's great to have those connections going back for years, many of them. And also is a great privilege to work with so many wonderful officers at Crawley Borough Council over the years, particularly in the services covered by the Environmental Services and Sustainability Portfolio, where so much has been achieved over the years and I have lots of happy memories of working with so many people for all those years.

I must acknowledge how grateful I am to my wife, Jean for her support over the years, through the inevitable ups and downs of serving in local government, always been a great support to me. I was moved to hear the comments about my late brother tonight as well we as we did serve briefly together on this Council until he moved away with work in Kent. He was elected in a by election. Now people do ask me sometimes, fairly often, actually, whether I miss my time at the Council or miss the Council, and evidently, of course, when something's been such a part of your life for so long, there are feelings of occasionally missing the direct involvement in the work of the Council and the Community as an elected representative. But I now find myself wondering whether, in a certain light receiving these honours sort of makes me a permanent member of the Council. I don't know whether that's true, probably not, but I hope to have an ongoing association with the Council anyway. I was very happy to attend the Community awards last week, and, I guess that going to those sort of events and supporting those sort of events is an important part of holding these and having these honours, and I'm quite happy to be doing those sorts of things.

So once again, thank you very much indeed for the recognition of my service that you've given me tonight and I look forward to meeting a lot of you and talking to a lot of you in the reception later on. So once again, thank you very much indeed.

4. Admission of Brian James Quinn as an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman of the Borough

It was moved by Councillor Chris Mullins and seconded by Councillor Lunnon

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That, in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do admit BRIAN JAMES QUINN to be an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Crawley, the most honourable distinctions which it is the privilege of the Council to bestow in appreciation and acknowledgement of the eminent services rendered by him to the Borough Council as a from 1998 until 2019, as Mayor of the Borough in 2003/04 and 2017/18 and a West Sussex County Councillor from 2013 until the present day, past Committee Member and Chairman of Broadfield Pages Community Centre, School Governor at Seymour School from 2004 to 2013, Trustee at Crawley

Museum from 2008 to 2013, Chairman of the Sarah Robinson Education Foundation from 2011 until the present day, President of Crawley Judo Club from 2008 to 2019, Chairman of Crawley & District Royal British Legion member since 1968 and Chairman for 2011/2012 and as an expression of the high esteem in which he is held by the Mayor, the Council and the people of the Town.

As well as Councillor Chris Mullins and Councillor Lunnon, Councillors Lanzer, Burgess and Rana also paid tribute to Brian Quinn.

With the motion having been duly carried, Brian Quinn thereupon signed the Rolls of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman, with his signatures being attested by the Mayor and the Chief Executive.

On behalf of the Council and the people of Crawley, the Mayor then conveyed her congratulations to Brian Quinn, and presented to him a badge and a scroll recording his admission as an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman.

Brian Quinn then addressed the Council and the assembled guests and expressed his thanks for being honoured in this way. A copy of his speech can be found below:

Good evening your worshipful the Mayor of Crawley, Chief Exec, Leader, distinguished guests, friends and family and obviously a special good evening to our honourable MP for Crawley, Peter Lamb. Thank you. And very nice here tonight to see the Chair of West Sussex attending here tonight. Thank you, Pieter, for coming it's very kind of you.

Well, I was going to say I stand here tonight, very humble, very humble indeed and very proud. Let's start with the humble, as Chris Mullins said, where I come from in Ireland it is a small village in the Midlands where I grew up until about 20 years of age, it didn't even have a pub in the village. Chris, there be no good to you, would it? No good at all, because there was my local school and the Catholic Church. But there was a lot of happy memories there and I do return to Ireland quite often, as this is where I feel proud.

When I arrived in this great town as a 20-year-old, never did I think that would be a Crawley borough councillor for over 20 years, let alone to be mayor of this town on two occasions. And I stand here tonight to be awarded this prestigious award is much more than I ever expected and to follow in the steps of the late Alderman Jim Smith, Bert Crane and Alan Quine I am truly honoured.

May I thank Chris Mullins for proposing me tonight and also to Tim Lunnon for seconded me, as well as the other speakers. May I thank all the speakers who spoke so kindly of me tonight it was very kind of you. Can I thank the residents of Broadfield for their wonderful support as without them I would not have been their councillor for all these years and most of all, my wife Susan and my two daughters for supporting me for all these years, it has been a privilege and an honour to serve this great town. Thank you.

5. Admission of Brenda Ann Smith as an Honorary Alderwomen and Honorary Freewoman of the Borough

It was moved by Councillor Lamb and seconded by Councillor Sue Mullins

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That, in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do admit BRENDA ANN SMITH to be an Honorary Alderwoman and Honorary Freewoman of the Borough of Crawley, the most honourable distinctions which it is the privilege of the Council to bestow in appreciation and acknowledgement of the eminent services rendered by her to the Borough Council as a Councillor from 1978 to 1984, 1988 to 1992 & 1996 to 2022 and as Mayor of the Borough in 1990/91 and 2014/15, as a West Sussex County Councillor from 2009 to 2021. Member for many years of Crawley & Dorsten Town Twinning Association and Chairman from 2017-2018, Crawley Dementia Ambassador, Founder of the Langley Green Forum, Campaigner for the building of the Mother and Baby Room situated on The Boulevard, Crawley, School Governor at Langley Green Infants & Junior School and Holy Trinity Church of England Secondary School for many years and as an expression of the high esteem in which he is held by the Mayor, the Council and the people of the Town.

As well as Councillor Lamb and Councillor Sue Mullins, Councillors Lanzer and Adeniyi also paid tribute to Brenda Smith.

With the motion having been duly carried, Brenda Smith thereupon signed the Rolls of Honorary Freewoman and Honorary Alderwoman, with her signatures being attested by the Mayor and the Chief Executive.

On behalf of the Council and the people of Crawley, the Mayor then conveyed her congratulations to Brenda Smith, and presented to her a badge and a scroll recording her admission as an Honorary Freewoman and Honorary Alderwoman.

Brenda Smith then addressed the Council and the assembled guests and expressed her thanks for being honoured in this way. A copy of her speech can be found below:

Thank you so much. I had absolutely no idea that I was going to get involved in the meeting tonight. I'm very, very honoured and I have to say and some of you will be surprised but really overwhelmed. I've been a member of the Council in Crawley for 36 years, over 39 year period, and although I've been off the Council now for about 2 years I still keep in touch with newspapers and via colleagues as to what's going on here and I believe I always will. It's been such a huge part of my life.

Of course, several of you have mentioned my late husband, Jim, who I met on the Council coming here as a single woman and Jim was on the council and we ended up getting married in committee room C, which was a bit of a novelty. The funny thing was that in committee room C, those of you who have been members over there, they have absolutely lovely polished tables and all through my wedding, all I could think about was that there was a coffee stain on the on the table and they needed to sort it out! But this building is very different, but I have to say my heart lays next door. And I should be really sad when they knock it down and it's been a big part of all of us I think, and I shall certainly miss it.

Apart from that, I don't know what to say to you but thank you for this honour, which was totally unexpected. I enjoyed watching everybody else coming up and talking sensibly, and I'm just wondering what else to say but it's been a great evening and to see so many of my colleagues - some old and new. We've got a lot of new councillors that I'm absolutely thrilled to see and several other younger councillors, and that's what we need.

Plus women, of course, but we've done quite well with women again, looking through the Chamber on both sides. They need us, you know, they don't like to admit it, but they! So thank you very much and it's been a lovely evening and I've had a brilliant time. Thank you.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Full Council concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.19 pm.

S Sivarajah (Mayor)