

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the Extra-Ordinary meeting of Droitwich Spa Town Council held in the Main Hall, Community Hall, Heritage Way, Droitwich Spa on **Monday 5 December 2016**, at 6pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R E Murphy (Mayor)
Councillor R G Beale
Councillor S Best
Councillor Mrs J Bolton
Councillor Mrs C Bowden
Councillor G R Brookes
Councillor G Duffy
Councillor L Evans
Councillor Mrs S Harris
Councillor A Humphries
Councillor T J Noyes
Councillor A Roberts
Councillor A Sinton

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillors Mrs A Hawkins, A H Laird and Mrs M A Lawley.

The Mayor preceded by the Mace-bearers and attended by the Town Clerk entered the Main Hall in procession. The Mayor invited ex Councillor P J Pinfield to be seated alongside.

172 HONORARY ALDERMAN – PETER JOHN PINFIELD

Pursuant to Minute No 127 of the Meeting of Council held on 25 September 2016, the Mayor invited Councillor A Humphries to put forward his formal motion for the conferring of Honorary Alderman status upon ex-Councillor P J Pinfield.

Councillor Humphries proposed that ‘We, the Mayor and Councillors of the Town of Droitwich Spa, hereby admit Peter John Pinfield to be an Honorary Alderman of the Town of Droitwich in recognition of the eminent service he has rendered to the community as an elected member of the town and for his meritorious services to the town in a non-civic capacity’. In support of the proposal, Councillor Humphries advised: *Mayor, Honoured Guest, Town Clerk, fellow Councillors, invited guests and ladies and gentleman may I take this opportunity of welcoming you all here this evening on behalf of Droitwich Spa Town Council on this the occasion of the granting of the title of Honorary Alderman of the town of Droitwich Spa to former Councillor Peter Pinfield. I understand that Councillor Mrs M A Lawley is in hospital at this present time and I am sure that we all wish her a speedy recovery.*

I would like to start off by saying what a great honour it is for me to be stood in front of you all today making this nomination following my unanimously supported proposal to confer this honour on Peter at the full Town Council Meeting on 26 September 2016. As you will all know Peter has lived in Droitwich for over 40 years having moved here with Pat and his young family in 1972 and has served the people of the town at all levels of local administration for the vast majority of that time on Droitwich Spa Town Council, Wychavon District Council and Worcestershire County Council; always with humility and humour but, more importantly, always with

dedication and the interests of the people of the town – political supporters or not – at the very core of what he did and, in very many ways, continues to do to this day. The list of Peter’s achievements for Droitwich Spa is an extensive one and I will let him tell you more about those other than a few I’d like to share with you. After all we’re here to hear from Peter and not be bored by me – no cheering from the cheap seats or the more dear ones for that matter!!! The very room we are now sat in came about via Peter’s efforts to secure such a facility for the town which is no better exemplified than by the plaque at the back of the room. This is but one example of a project that Peter was determined to get for the people of Droitwich that would benefit everyone in its community. Then there is the legend known as the “Pinfield Bumps”!!! Now at this stage I don’t want you to worry that the Labour Party has some bizarre initiation ritual for new members – we much prefer protracted and public leadership debates leaving these quirker traditions to other political parties – present company excepted – I’ll let you decide!!! The Council became aware that there were problems outside Droitwich High School with traffic and there were concerns that there might be accidents and even fatalities which, with the latter, thankfully, there were not. Peter was determined to secure the funding to install some speed bumps and, as I think we all know, when he gets determined, something inevitably happens and in this case, unsurprisingly, the bumps were installed. I am led to believe that many a driver has gone over those bumps at speed and been heard to exclaim “those bloody Pinfield bumps” or at least a variation of that as I’m keeping it as clean as possible! Yet another testament to Peter’s determination to see that all parts of the town’s community were looked after.

Sir Peter Luff, former Mid Worcestershire MP, once said of Peter that he was “a drop of red in a sea of blue”. I can only say to you Peter – I feel your pain comrade; I truly feel your pain!!! However, Peter never allowed this daunt to him and certainly never allowed it to stop him doing what he did best – serving the town of Droitwich Spa. On arriving in Droitwich Spa some 3 and a half years ago and wishing to get involved in local politics I was introduced to many great local Labour politicians who have served this community – Eve Freer, former Mayor. John Cook, former Deputy Mayor, Linda Hobson, Sheila Seabourne and Sheila Neary – all still active in the community. Also, Edgar Harwood – Edgar there are not enough words although I’m sure you could think of a few! Roy Seabourne sadly no longer with us who once offered me ten minutes of his time and then when he found out I supported Birmingham City reduced it to five because he supported Aston Villa and he was about to watch them play West Brom!!! However, I’m sure they would all agree that Peter’s dedication to Droitwich Spa is up there with the very best and worthy of this great accolade being bestowed on him by the Mayor and the Town Council today.

I consider it the greatest of honours to be stood up here making this speech today and to follow in his footsteps and can say without doubt that if I can achieve a tiny fraction of Peter has done, then I will have done well.”

The Mayor called upon Councillor T J Noyes to speak. Councillor Noyes stated: “There are few people in the local community who have the necessary qualifications to be able to be considered for such a title. The person must have been a Town Councillor for a significant time, must have served the local community, have performed notable work with the Voluntary Sector or Educational Bodies, with Wychavon District Council or Worcestershire County Council. Peter Pinfield has done the lot and is the current Chairman of the independent health watchdog

Healthwatch Worcestershire. I first met Peter some 30 years ago. He was already established as a pillar of the community and was the figurehead of the Droitwich Spa Allotments Association. Peter turned up at my house in Vernon Grove and signed me up for what was destined to be a short term allotment on what is now Homebase on the Kidderminster Road. We have been friends ever since and I can honestly say we have never fallen out in all of those years. Peter has represented Droitwich Spa West on Town Council for many years and because of his connections many local people still look to him for guidance and support. If Peter couldn't sort it he knew a man who could. It was a pleasure to be on the same side at District Council looking out for the people of Droitwich and we have enjoyed many mutual challenges. Be it locally in Droitwich Spa, the District of Wychavon, the County of Worcestershire or now Nationally through his NHS connections Peter has carved a niche for himself and I am pleased to second his nomination for Honorary Alderman. It is well earned and he deserves to be remembered for all he has done and continues to do for the good of Droitwich Spa.

The motion, upon being put to the vote, was carried unanimously and it was

RESOLVED That We, the Mayor and Councillors of the Town of Droitwich Spa, hereby admit Peter John Pinfield to be an Honorary Alderman of the Town of Droitwich in recognition of the eminent service he has rendered to the community as an elected member of the town and for his meritorious services to the town in a non-civic capacity.

By permission of the Mayor, the Town Clerk then proceeded to administer the Alderman's Oath, this being duly taken and sworn by Peter John Pinfield. The Oath was then signed and witnessed by the Town Clerk. The Mayor presented an illuminated Certificate of Admission as an Honorary Alderman of the town of Droitwich Spa to ex-Councillor Pinfield and offered congratulations on behalf of the Council and people of the Town. Mr Pinfield responded, thanking the Town Council for the honour bestowed upon him and giving a brief summary of the actions and assistance he had received from many along the way. He reported: *"Mr Mayor, Droitwich Town Council, my proposer, seconder and distinguished guests, friends and colleagues, it is with some pride and a degree of humility that I thank you on behalf of Pat and myself for this very public award and it is very much appreciated that so many have turned up tonight to share the moment. I do send my best wishes to Councillor Mrs Lawley for a speedy recovery and also thank Edgar Harwood for turning up in his Santa suit tonight prior to his stint with the Droitwich Spa Rotary Club's Christmas Sleigh 2017 fundraiser. Little did I realise that when I first started out in 1979, Pat with her diabetics group and me with the allotments, that it would take me through some thirty-two years of public and community service – but where did that time go! Many of you will have been with me on that journey, it is a long time but you can cram a lot in. Looking back, my involvement in the Town and its community goes back to the early 1970's, my involvement in promoting and establishing a solid base of the Town's Allotments was one of my very first contacts with the Town Council and I should mention this work with Phil Duffy, Cyril Hands and Les Hoare. And of course all those years back I first met Tom and Glenise Noyes, we all go back a long time. Although I retired from Council activities I am immensely proud of the work and opportunity that I have been given heading up 'Healthwatch Worcestershire', that and my chairmanship of the Margaret Westwood*

Charity Trust enables me in a non-party-political way to be fully engaged and still give something back to the community where I live in and brought up my family and am now seeing that second generation involved in community life. So for me, giving something back, getting involved, standing up, speaking out, seeking fairness and equality, is the cornerstone of who I am and it is important to me, I have to give something back.

In receiving this honour I want to place on record that without the people in this room none of my thirty or so projects that I have been involved in would have happened, none of the twelve or so positions of leadership I have held over those thirty-two years would have any impact without the work, involvement and support you have given me, and I must pay tribute to those who are no longer with us but who have been part and parcel of my journey (and apologies if I miss anyone out) - John Croucher, Geoff Showell, Larry Wright, Jeff Sharpe, Ann Walton, Anne Sandalls, Eileen Hope, Glenise Noyes, Graham Gopsill, Don Lawley, John Clarke, John Wrenn, Vic and Audrey Isaacs, Harry Hipkiss, Roy Seabourne, Cyril Hands, Bill Freer, Keith Hobson. These projects have included the Arts & Music Festival, the Adventure Playground, my time as Chairman of the Grants Committee and all the wonderful projects we were able to support especially those that involved music, the arts and youth, changing the flat roofs of the houses at Westlands (previously Boycott) and my time as a school governor at the first, middle and high schools, road improvements and all the help Geoff Shelby gave me there, the Lido, Covercroft Day Centre, the Old Library, the new Library, the Town Council's civic buildings and so on but of course there have been disappointments such as Highfield Hospital petition and the march through, the brine baths, the roof over the Lido but some good has come in part. One highlight was the Canals Project and I mention Pam Davey, Colin Beardwood, Lynne Duffy, John Smith, Ann & Bill Walton. Funds were needed and £2million achieved. I have also been especially proud of my work with the Worcestershire Carers and also a civic venture undertaken in South Africa.

As with most men, a special mention must be made for my wife Pat for her ongoing sterling support, patience and good commonsense that has brought me back on track many times.

In conclusion, I always view things in a positive way, the glass is 'always half full' and although we all have a differences it is what we have in common and have achieved together that matters, and for over thirty-two years we have done this together.

The Mayor and Honorary Alderman then invited all present to join them for refreshments in the John Corbett Room. The Mayor declared the meeting closed and retired from the Chamber in procession.

The Meeting ended at 6.30pm.

Chairman of Council _____
30 January 2017