



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY COUNCIL HELD ON 26th FEBRUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillor P Thurgood (Chair), Councillors R Kingstone, M Bailey, J Chesworth, R Bilcliff, A Bishop, R Claymore, T Clements, D Cook, M Cook, C Cooke, S Doyle, J Faulkner, R Ford, M Gant, S Goodall, M Greatorex, A James, T Jay, K Norchi, J Oates, M Oates, S People, Dr S People, B Price, R Pritchard, R Rogers, P Standen and M Summers

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Ryan Keyte (Head of Legal & Democratic Services) and Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant)

55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Claymore declared a Personal Interest as the late Steven Claymore was her husband.

57 NOMINATION OF HONORARY ALDERMAN - STEVEN CLAYMORE

The following speeches were made;

Councillor D Cook – “Thank you Mr Mayor I think that many members of the Chamber will of course recall that using the status of Honorary Alderman for those that have served this Council was only really brought online in Tamworth over the last few years.

We had an opportunity to catch up with many members who served over this Council for many years and give them the Honorary Alderman Title many years after they have finished their service.

Many of those were very worthy of that Honorary Alderman Status, I can think of none more worthy than Councillor Steve Claymore. He was my colleague, he was

my brother in arms, he was my partner, and he was my friend. The things he achieved for Tamworth were fundamentally phenomenal to say he never held the title of Leader.

His work with the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, his work with the combined authority, his work with the Local Plan in Tamworth, his handling of the economy in Tamworth from his position is simply superb.

The benefits out there for all residents to see, he did it with a distinction, a passion and a pure belief that the residents of Tamworth deserved better than the status quo.

I have spoken many times over the last couple of weeks about Steve Claymore and I think everybody has now heard what I've got to say about Steve.

I'm just happy to be stood here tonight Mr Mayor to actually nominate Councillor Steve Claymore for the position of Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Tamworth, Thank you."

Councillor Dr S Peuple –“Thank you Mr Mayor, obviously the occasion is sad and I wish to not have to do this, I can say without reservation members on my group were devastated when they heard the news of his original diagnosis and of his death.

Can I start at the beginning by saying it was about 20 years ago that I had to speak at my own father's funeral I think that Steve's children did him proud when they spoke, I was 30 odd and had experience of being on the Council by then and I had something to draw on the day when packed with strangers the Church looked very odd so I would just like to say to them how well they did and how well they did for you and how very much they were doing their father proud, they did a wonderful job.

Can I also say Mr Mayor that it was a very lovely service because for those of us that had dealt with Steve in different ways who wouldn't have had the same opportunities you came away really feeling as though you knew him better, from those who knew him the most, it was a very fitting tribute to him the whole event spoke volumes of the regard in which he was held.

He was a man who sat opposite but nonetheless always reached out, always discussed, always wanted to work as far as he could, it didn't stop him telling me that my calculations were on the back of a fag packet. But the kind of man that he was, as I left the chamber he stopped me to say "when I said that I really think I shouldn't have " and that was the thing about him he was big enough to say "do you know sometimes the debate isn't as high as we all want it to be"

He was a really valued colleague obviously to his political colleagues but to all of us Councillors and I know the Officers held him in great regard not because he

did what they said, but because he convinced them to do what they thought was a very good idea in whatever way that particular project had to go.

He was someone who had fun I couldn't help but grin which I'm sure was not inappropriate when Councillor Cook told us about how he said to his colleagues in Manchester "I've got Cancer and you want me to die of hunger" I could just hear him saying it and thinking it because he would have reminded them what was most important.

Steve I got to know better through the fact that he was very keen when I was asked to represent the Borough on the LEP/Scrutiny. We used to talk regularly and discussed what mattered, to him it was not a political colour but by being there one can do more for Tamworth.

And talking to one side with the person and talking to the other side with another was a greater good for the whole event; he wanted Tamworth to do well.

He was a really lovely chap. I would say that what we heard whether he developed his taste for vodka after he joined the Council I don't know entirely but what I would say is he was here with Rosey and none of us can do this without the support of that person who may or may not be with us in the Chamber but who is always there when we feel fed up, useless, on top of the world whatever it is we need that support and you were a marvellous support to him you could tell that.

Can I also say Mr Mayor that one of the difficulties on the Council is coming on young, not really knowing the way round, having to learn and when Tom came on the Council he got that support from Steve and from Rosey before she was a Councillor, they would always talk to him, they encouraged a young person to be a Councillor and do it as well as they could.

Bringing on younger people is a tradition we all need because there is plenty of us that are on the wrong side of 50 let alone maybe older and in time will need to be replaced, Steve knew that and wanted to encourage it didn't matter what side he was on, he encouraged him anyway.

I believe that in the way he acted to each of us made him an absolute gentleman.

I remember Councillor Cook telling me about when Steve was diagnosed after the delayed election in Glascote last year, one of the lovely things was virtually every time I went out canvassing, door knocking and leafleting and you happened to bump in to the Conservative team nearly always Steve was there.

The fact is that he and I could have swapped places and neither of us would ever have fallen out because with him it was never personal. The party wanted to win the seat, the party wanted to defend their seat that's fine, he was never personal and that's how he achieved that respect in that period of time.

Councillor Cook talked about his policies I'm not going to get in to politics of it; he is remembered tonight with affection and respect for what he was a very decent person, who cared about his town. He cared hugely about his family and we know that is what happens when somebody cares for those that matter they extend that care to a wider group which is what makes the best Councillors and Councillor Claymore was the best of those people and I would just say we had discussed with the Tory group the proposal and a way around the bar because we wanted him to hear some of the nice things whilst he was here, to hear them.

I did cheat slightly in the last couple of Council Meetings when he was talking about the economic policy and I was chipping in to say what a good job he had done on the LEP, because I wanted him to hear it, but maybe out of tonight's debate if I can say Rosey, rather than Councillor Claymore can go home to her family and say "your dad and everything he gave to the town was really respected and reflected in the attitude of everyone tonight. Thank you Mr Mayor and therefore I second that."

Mayor P Thurgood- "On a personal note without Steve and Rosey I wouldn't be here. The work they did when I was in trouble at home.

All the best Steve, wherever you are."

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council in recognition of his services admit the title of Honorary Alderman of the Borough to Steven Claymore

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor Dr S Peuple)

The Mayor