

# Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 22nd July, 2015.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Ian Dalgarno); Cllr Helen Atkinson, Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr Chris Clough, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Philip Dennis, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lisa Grainge, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Stephen Parry, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Rachael Proud, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Tracey Stott, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Matthew Vickers, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Julia Whitehill and Cllr Bill Woodhead.

**Officers:** N Schneider (CE); J Danks, B Brown, L King (R), J Humphreys (CESC); P Dobson (DNS); P Kelly (PH); J Nertney, P K Bell, J McDonald (LD).

**Also in attendance:** Members of the public, Mr D Harris.

**Apologies:** Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Ben Houchen, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

## **C Welcome and Recording of the Meeting**

**24/15**

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the procedure for the recording of the meeting.

The evacuation procedure was noted.

## **C Declarations of Interest**

**25/15**

Councillor Sylvia Walmsley declared a person non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 - Nominations for the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen as her husband was named on the nominations list.

## **C Proposal to Confer the Honour of the Freedom of the Borough on Robert Gibson OBE**

**26/15**

Council gave consideration to the granting of the Freedom of the Borough on Bob Gibson OBE.

The Council was empowered under section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of Freeman of the Borough on persons / organisations of distinction and persons / organisations who had in the opinion of Council rendered eminent services to the Borough.

The award of Honorary Freeman was the highest honour a Council can bestow and as such was given rarely. Stockton Borough Council had a total of 20 Honorary Freeman:-

- December 2011: The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Regiment
- 8 July 2009: The Yorkshire Regiment
- 21 January 2009: The Rifles
- 29 April 1999: Mary Butterwick

- 13 September 1991: Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Leslie Cohen (OBE, TD, CPM, JP), James Henry Cooke and Margaret Eileen Jackson (MBE, JP)
- 24 July 1985: Major Edward Cooper (VCJP)
- 22 May 1977: The Light Infantry Regiment
- 23 May 1968: the Rt. Hon. Horace Maybray King (PhD, MP), the Rt. Hon. Maurice Harold MacMillan (FRS), George Rowland Chetwynd Esq (CBE) and Mrs Helen M. Bott (BEM)
- 14 February 1956: Charles William Allison (OBE, JP)
- 16 April 1931: Thomas Downey
- 10 February 1927: Leonard Ropner (JP)
- 21 February 1921: Robert Bainbridge
- 29 April 1907: Sir Frank Brown
- 19 February 1904: Richard Hind and Jonathan Samuel
- 5 February 1891: Sir Robert Ropner (BART)

Bob Gibson OBE had been a leading character in Teesside politics for over three decades.

He came into politics through the Stockton Trades Council, before being elected in Parkfield Division to Cleveland County Council. But it was Stockton Council where his real passion lay, gaining a seat in 1983 in the Newtown Ward for Labour where he remained until 2015. He became Labour Group Leader in 1989.

In 1990 Bob took over as Stockton Council Leader continuing until May 2007, when he demonstrated that his priority and passions were for the borough's benefit rather than his own personal prestige by agreeing to step aside and hand the role of Leader of the Council to the Conservative Party in an historic 'power-sharing' agreement.

He confidently led the Council through the turbulent local government re-organisation in the 1990's to achieve the status of a Unitary Authority (1 April 1996). He was completely undaunted by the challenge of being a single tier authority with responsibility for all local government functions within its area. In the years that followed his determination and energy helped to drive the Council forward in its pursuit of excellence in every area of service, leading to a variety of 'Best value' awards.

He personally led the pursuit of winning a £37.5m from a City Challenge bid for Central Stockton. With the additional cash levered in it meant a £150m investment in the area over five years.

He had fulfilled a number of important roles which had shaped the direction and future of the people living in his former Ward, the Borough and the region such as:-

- driving forward the provision of a single point of access for local residents to access vital services, agencies and programmes – leading to the creation of Newtown Community and Resource Centre.
- Labour Group Leader (April 1989 - being a member and chair of a number of council committees (including Appeals & Complaints, Audit, Cabinet, Corporate Directors Remuneration Panel, Executive Scrutiny, Housing and Community Safety, Planning, Standards)

- establishing and leading Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board – bringing together a cross-section of stakeholders (from the community, private and public sectors) to help drive forward the development of the borough to achieve the aspirations of its ‘2020 vision’ to revitalise the area;
- chairman of the Association of North East Councils and the North East Assembly;
- a member of the Local Government Association (Teesside Branch, General Assembly and Urban Commission)
- director of Tristar Housing (now part of Thirteen), Know How North East, Durham Tees Valley Airport Ltd., and Teesside Environmental Trust.

Under his dynamic leadership, the far-reaching beneficial friendship between the Council and Durham University was established – with the “leading alternative to Oxford and Cambridge” going on to develop its Queen’s Campus (1992) site in the Borough with its two colleges and the Wolfson Research Institute (2001) – raising the profile and reputation of the area and attracting some of the ‘brightest and best’ students from across the UK, Europe and the world.

The significance of his outstanding contribution to Local Government in the North East literally received the royal seal of approval in the Queen’s 2006 New Year Honours when he became Robert Gibson Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE).

Ultimately, Robert Gibson had invested a significant proportion of his life as a faithful and loyal servant to this community, this Council and this borough - enhancing its profile, its reputation and putting in place solid foundations for its future success and development which made him an ideal candidate for consideration to receive the Freedom of the Borough.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Freedom of the Borough of Stockton be conferred upon Bob Gibson OBE.
2. His name be placed on the Roll of Honorary Freeman of the Borough.
3. Bob Gibson OBE be presented with a sealed and illuminated copy of the Resolution at the meeting of Council to be held on 25th November 2015.

**C  
27/15**

### **Nominations for the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen**

Council was asked to give consideration to the appointment of Honorary Aldermen in accordance with Section 249 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Under Section 249 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 a principal Council may, by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of Members in attendance and voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose, confer the title of Honorary Alderman on persons who had, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council as past Members, but who were not current Members of the Council.

The Act indicated that service with predecessor Authorities would count as

service to be taken into account when conferring the honour.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council had agreed that reckonable service for the purpose of conferring this title should be at least 12 years.

Nominations had been received in respect of the following nominees, who satisfied the terms of the above criteria:-

Name	Terms of Service	Cumulative Years' Service
Lynne Apedaile	2001 – 2015	14
Dick Cains	1999 – 2011	12
David Coleman	1991 – 2015	24
Maurice Frankland (deceased)	1999 – 2011	12
Bob Gibson	1983 – 2015	32
Colin Leckonby	1991 - 1995 2002 - 2015	17
Ken Lupton	1999 – 2015	16
Bill Noble	1995 – 2011	16
Maureen Rigg	2003 – 2015	12
Andrew Sherris	1983 – 1995 and 2005 – 2015	22
Steve Walmsley	1999 – 2015	16
Mary Womphrey	2003 – 2015	12
Mick Womphrey	1987 - 2015	28

If Members agree the above nominations, then it was recommended that the title be conferred on the nominees at the Council meeting on the 25th November 2015.

RESOLVED that

1. The title of Honorary Alderman be conferred on the former Councillors:-

- Lynne Apedaile
- Dick Cains
- David Coleman
- Maurice Frankland (deceased)
- Bob Gibson
- Colin Leckonby
- Ken Lupton
- Bill Noble
- Maureen Rigg
- Fred Salt
- Andrew Sherris
- Steve Walmsley
- Mary Womphrey
- Mick Womphrey

2. The named above and an invited guest and members of the family of the late Maurice Frankland be invited to attend the meeting of Council on the 25th November 2015 to participate in a ceremony during which the title will be conferred.

