

CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF COUNCIL – TUESDAY 23 MAY 2023

ITEM 6 WRITTEN ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LORD MAYOR

ELECTIONS

I warmly welcome everybody to today's Annual Meeting of Council, but I wish to extend a special welcome to those elected for the first time.

I am sure Members and Officers will join me in wishing you all a productive and rewarding time serving your constituents.

On behalf of Elected Member colleagues, I would like to express our gratitude for the effective and efficient work carried out by all staff involved during the busy Election period.

DEATH OF FORMER COUNCILLOR JAMES (JIM) FLOOD

It is with sadness that I report to Council the death of former Councillor Jim Flood, who represented the Bingley Ward from 1995 until 1999, which occurred on 08 May 2023.

Former Councillor Flood served his constituents with great energy and commitment and during his time on this Council he had a particular interest in educational matters.

I would like to place on record our gratitude for his service to this Council and those he represented, together with our sorrow at his passing. His widow, family and friends are in our thoughts.

DEATH OF FORMER COUNCILLOR DAVID HARRISON

I am saddened to also report the death of former Councillor David Harrison, on 04 May 2023, at the age of 90.

Former Councillor Harrison represented the Craven Ward from 1991 to 1995 and from 1996 until 2004.

He was a diligent and energetic local Councillor who ably represented his constituents and whose ready sense of humour and warmly approachable personality characterised his work.

He and his wife Janet memorably served as Deputy Lord Mayor and Deputy Lady Mayoress during the term of Richard Wightman as Lord Mayor in 2002/2003. On Council, he was particularly involved in matters relating to housing and environmental protection.

I would like to record our thanks for his lengthy service to this local authority and his constituents and to express our sympathy to his widow, family and friends, who remain in our thoughts at this time.

DEATH OF PROFESSOR DAVID SHARPE, OBE

It was with much sorrow that I learned of the death of Professor David Sharpe, OBE, which occurred on 22 March 2023, at the age of 77.

The Valley Parade fire disaster on 11 May 1985, which took place as Bradford City AFC were playing Lincoln City FC, claimed 56 lives and left hundreds more injured – many with life-changing burns to their scalps, legs and hands.

At the time, Professor Sharpe had been working as a consultant plastic surgeon for just five months, and he led the surgical response in the aftermath to the tragedy, conducting more than twenty operations in the first few hours. His pioneering work resulted in his inventing the ‘Bradford Sling’, which revolutionised the management of hand injuries worldwide.

After the disaster, he went on to found the Plastic Surgery and Burns Research Unit (PSBRU) - a partnership between the Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the Bradford Royal Infirmary and the Centre for Skin Sciences at the University of Bradford - making the city a pioneer in the field of burns research and the treatment of scars. This research unit (also known as the Bradford Burns Unit) is now internationally renowned and is recognised as one of the leading units of its kind in the country.

Professor Sharpe was honoured with the OBE in 1986, was awarded a Doctor of Science from the University of Bradford in 2011 for his work as an honorary professor at the university and remained the Clinical Director of the Unit until his retirement in 2014, following a career in plastic surgery spanning some 40 years.

His warm and compassionate personality and his mentoring of plastic surgery trainees earned him many friends and admirers here and across the world and his loss is most keenly felt. I am sure we all wish to extend our sympathy to his widow, family and friends and to pay tribute to both the man and the fine legacy he leaves behind.

DEATH OF HANS-JOACHIM (JOCKEL) REISNER

I also learnt, with sorrow, of the death of Jockel Reisner which took place on 19 April 2023, at the age of 85.

A renowned German artist, known particularly for his sculptural work, Jockel was married to Bradfordian Joyce and, together, they were one of the driving forces in the twinning of Shipley/Bradford with Hamm in June of 1976 and always treasured the strong links between the two cities.

Following the Valley Parade Fire Disaster in 1985, Jockel designed and created the memorial sculpture which stands in Centenary Square and which is the focal point for much love and quiet, enduring, remembrance throughout the year and particularly on the 11 May anniversary of the tragedy. A twin sculpture stands outside the Town Hall in Hamm, where a short service also takes place on the anniversary and which, as the Lord Mayor remarked at this year’s commemoration, “forever unites our two communities”.

I hope you will all wish to join me in expressing our sincere condolences to Jockel's widow, family and friends in their grievous loss. He was a great friend to Bradford over many years and I hope they will take comfort in knowing that his memory and his artistic legacy will continue to touch lives for many years to come.

38th ANNIVERSARY OF BRADFORD CITY AFC FIRE DISASTER

Thursday 11 May 2023 marked the 38th anniversary of the Valley Parade fire disaster, a dark day in Bradford's history and one which resulted not only in a dreadful loss of life, but which left countless others injured or dreadfully affected by what they experienced.

This very moving, and well-attended, service was attended by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant, Mr. Ed Anderson, CBE, the Lord Mayor, the High Sheriff of West Yorkshire, the Mayor and Mayor's Consort from Lincoln, senior representatives of Bradford City AFC and Lincoln City FC, Professor Mahajan of the Plastic Surgery and Burns Research Unit and the Emergency Services, all of whom laid floral tributes, among many other family members, fans and friends.

The service was led by the Dean of Bradford, The Very Revd Andy Bowerman, together with Pastor Oliver Evans, the Club Chaplain and a blessing was given by the Bishop of Bradford, The Rt Revd Dr Toby Howarth.

Special mention of the recent sad deaths of both Professor David Sharpe and Jockel Reisner was made by the Lord Mayor at the service.

THE ROYAL YORKSHIRE REGIMENT – TITLE BESTOWAL

On 05 April 2023, His Majesty The King bestowed the title 'The Royal Yorkshire Regiment' on what had formerly been the Yorkshire Regiment. The award of this singular honour will cement their soldiers' and officers' pride and identity in belonging to a unique, county-named infantry regiment, committed to service and duty to the nation.

While continuing to undertake their operational challenges with their characteristic levels of fortitude, professionalism and commitment, I am sure we all hope that they do so with an enhanced sense of pride in belonging to the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and wish them well in all their future endeavours.

Distribution:

Lord Mayor-Designate (Cllr Gerry Barker)

Chief Executive (Kersten England)

Director of Legal and Governance (Asif Ibrahim)

Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer (Jason Field)

Head of Governance (Mandy Hill)

Acting Civic Affairs Manager (Farzana Mughal)

Governance, Scrutiny & Members' Support Manager (Guy Close)

Principal Executive Officer, Chief Executive's Office (Nigel Smith)

PA to the Leader of Council (Majella O'Malley)

Policy Research Officer, Bradford Labour Group (Simon O'Hare)