

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Special Meeting of the  
**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen,  
Witney, on Wednesday 29 June 2016 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: N A MacRae MBE (Chairman), Mrs M J Crossland (Vice Chairman), A J Adams, Mrs J C Baker, M A Barrett, A C Beaney, R J M Bishop, M Brennan, Mrs L J Chapman, A S Coles, N G Colston, J C Cooper, D A Cotterill, C Cottrell-Dormer, C G Dingwall, P J G Dorward, Mrs J M Doughty, H B Eaglestone, P Emery, Mrs E H N Fenton, E J Fenton, A M Graham, J Haine, P J Handley, Miss G R Hill, H J Howard, E H James, P D Kelland, Mrs L E C Little, J F Mills, T J Morris, T N Owen, Dr E M E Poskitt, A H K Postan, Mrs C E Reynolds, G Saul, T B Simcox, H E T St John, G H L Wall and B J Woodruff.

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs L C Carter, R A Courts, D S T Enright, S J Good, A D Harvey, R A Langridge, Ms E P R Leffman, R D J McFarlane and W D Robinson

16. HONORARY ALDERMAN – SIR BARRY NORTON

Mr Cooper proposed that, pursuant to the provision of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, West Oxfordshire District Council hereby confers the title of Honorary Alderman upon Sir Barry John Norton in recognition of the eminent service rendered to the Council and the community over many years.

In proposing the recommendation, Mr Cooper paid tribute to the contribution made by Sir Barry since his election as representative for North Leigh in 1983 as successor to Mr J F Swain. Mr Cooper emphasised Sir Barry's interest in recreation and highlighted some of the numerous projects that had taken place during his Chairmanship of the Leisure and Tourism Committee. These included the refurbishment of the Windrush Leisure Centre, the provision of the Witney and Carterton artificial turf pitches, the Carterton and Chipping Norton swimming pools and leisure centres and the Carterton pavilion. In addition, the Council had also supported the upgrading of a large number of village halls.

Mr Cooper indicated that West Oxfordshire had always remained a compassionate Council and praised Sir Barry for his role in bringing together the various elements of its predecessor authorities. He continued by citing a number of the significant initiatives that had taken place during Sir Barry's period of office; the voluntary transfer of the Council's housing stock, contracting out the refuse collection and leisure management services and, latterly, the development of Ubico and the 2020 Vision project. In this regard, Mr Cooper noted Officers from the Council had filled a significant number of senior positions within these projects; whilst other West Oxfordshire Officers had gone on to develop their careers at higher levels elsewhere.

Mr Cooper noted that Sir Barry had sought to promote the interests of West Oxfordshire through its Members of Parliament at the highest levels of Government and, in conclusion, recalled the sentiments expressed by Baron Grimond of Sir Neil Marten to the effect that, whilst he might have disagreed with him, he had never found him to be a disagreeable chap.

Mr Cooper expressed the hope that Sir Barry and Lady Molly would attend many Civic Functions in the future.

The proposition was seconded by Mr Mills who expressed his thanks to Mr Cooper for making the proposition. Although only recently having stepped into the role, Mr Mills indicated that he had already developed a far greater appreciation of what Sir Barry had done for the District as Leader of the Council.

Mr Mills advised that during meetings within the District, County and beyond, he had been struck by number of positive comments made about Sir Barry and, in particular, his desire to place the interests of West Oxfordshire uppermost. He indicated that Sir Barry would be a difficult act to follow and expressed his personal pleasure in being able to second this cross party proposition which, in itself, spoke volumes of the appreciation felt by all Members.

Having received honours at a national level, it was only right and fitting that Sir Barry should be honoured locally in reflection of the high esteem in which he was held.

Mr Coles indicated that the Labour Group wished to echo the sentiments expressed and reiterate the earlier statement made by Mr Enright that this was a well-deserved honour. Sir Barry's contribution had been significant not only to the Council and the District of West Oxfordshire but beyond and warranted this award.

Sir Barry was always a true gentleman who treated his political opponents with courtesy and respect, always being prepared to receive, if not always to accept, a contrary view.

Having served only four years on the Council, Mr Coles recognised the level of commitment evidenced by Sir Barry's length of service. His appointment as an Honorary Alderman was made in recognition of this service, the value placed upon his contribution by Members and in appreciation of the courtesy he had shown.

In conclusion, Mr Coles extended all good wishes for the future to Sir Barry and his family.

On being put to the vote the motion  
**UNANIMOUSLY**

**WAS CARRIED**

**RESOLVED:** That, pursuant to the provision of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, West Oxfordshire District Council hereby confers the title of Honorary Alderman upon Sir Barry John Norton in recognition of the eminent service rendered to the Council and the community over many years.

In response, Sir Barry expressed his thanks to the Chairman, Members and staff and his appreciation of the kindness shown to him and his family since it became apparent that he would be unable to stand for re-election in May.

Sir Barry indicated that he and his family would always treasure the honour bestowed upon him as the first Honorary Alderman appointed by West Oxfordshire District Council since its formation in 1974. West Oxfordshire was a wonderful Council and it had been a great pleasure to serve the residents of North Leigh and the wider District. Whilst he would miss the day to day involvement with the Authority, Sir Barry undertook to do his utmost to continue to be a good ambassador for West Oxfordshire in the future.

The meeting closed at 2.15pm

CHAIRMAN