

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 13 July 2010 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor L Rimmer (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	S Hore
J E Alcock	B Jones
D A Berryman	E M H Ranson
S Brunskill	M Robinson
R M Croasdale	C Ross
D C Eccleston	I Sayers
R J Elms	G Scott
M Fielding	R E Sherras
G Geldard	D T Smith
R Hargreaves	J S Sutcliffe
J B Hill	M E Sutcliffe
T Hill	D Taylor
B Hilton	R J Thompson
K Hind	J Waddington
S A Hirst	J White
J Holgate	A Yearling

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Resources, Human Resources Manager, Legal Services Manager.

172 PRAYERS

The Reverend Canon Norman Atty opened the meeting with prayers.

173 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors A M Knox, C Punchard, J Rogerson, M Thomas and N C Walsh.

174 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

175 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation.

176 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 April 2010, and the minutes of the Annual Council held on 11 May 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

177

MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on over 50 engagements which she had attended since the last meeting including the opening of two exhibitions at The Platform Gallery, a charity fund raising bike ride in aid of the Sanctuary of Healing, a Family Picnic Day at the Castle field and the opening of a rehabilitation unit at Thistle Manor. She had also attended a special ceremony to award five medals to a World War II veteran – Mr S Brierley.

178

LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader of the Council, Councillor M Ranson, began by outlining the objectives of the Council for the year ahead, stressing that specifically the Council would continue to strive to provide an excellent level of service and that the Council would position itself to meet the new requirements of financial restraint and new opportunities that would arise during the year ahead. Following the election of a new Government the Leader confirmed that there would be less money for Local Government as a whole and that the Council would be required to continue to look at reducing costs. The Leader believed that the lifting of reporting schemes such as CAA would help to reduce costs and confirmed that for the last six months the Corporate Management Team (CMT) had been discussing a new management structure and that he expected proposals would be forthcoming shortly. He went on to report that the cuts announced by the Government and the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies had hit the Council's partners in Pennine Lancashire hard. He reported that discussions were taking place regarding the possibility of Pennine Lancashire becoming one of the new Local Enterprise Partnerships that were being proposed by the Government. This was something the Council would be actively involved in but the Leader had made it clear to other leaders and executives in Pennine Lancashire that Ribble Valley would be pressing for more equitable distribution of any associated non ring fenced funding. The Leader reported that there was to be a meeting within the next week of all Leaders and Chief Executives in Lancashire to discuss the future.

The Leader went on to note the recent announcements regarding the upheaval of the NHS and the Primary Care Trusts. He felt that this could have significant implications for the Council and its residents. He confirmed that, in relation to NHS matters, he believed it was important to set up a working group to explore future plans and opportunities. He proposed that the working group would represent the political balance and include relevant officers. He confirmed he would be discussing the make up and terms of reference of such a group with the Chief Executive and Shadow Leader and suggested that the group might report to Policy and Finance Committee.

The Leader went on to highlight a range of excellent events and projects which the Council had been involved with, for example the annual Ribble Valley Sports and Art Community Awards where awards had been presented to clubs, coaches, volunteers, community champions and Sports Excellence Grants had been given to outstanding sportsmen and women. He was pleased to report that this year grants had also been enlarged to include Arts Excellence Grants to 22

young dancers, actors and musicians from the Borough. The Leader praised the quality and breadth of talent shown by the young people of the Borough and that whilst monetary grants had been quite modest recipients had been very appreciative of the Awards which had been given.

The Leader was also delighted to report that the Clitheroe Castle Museum had been named as the Small Visitor Attraction of the Year at the 2010 Lancashire and Blackpool Tourism Awards. The museum was now attracting 30,000 visitors a year compared with 8,000 prior to its refurbishment. The Award was testament to the hard work put in by a wide range of officers and staff from the Council. In future the Leader looked forward to the relaunch of the highly acclaimed Ribble Valley Food Trail and the Clitheroe Fine Food Street Market which was to be held on 14 August.

The Leader ended by saying that Ribble Valley had much to be proud of and was confident that the Council could continue to deal with the changes it would be presented with over the next few years. He confirmed that the Council continued to have a prudent financial regime backed up by excellent financial disciplines and practices by officers, a dedicated workforce and elected members who always had the community foremost in their thoughts and actions.

179

LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Shadow Deputy Leader, Councillor S Sutcliffe asked the Leader for details on how the Council's consumption of gas and electricity had changed since 2007.

The Leader thanked Councillor Sutcliffe for his question and was pleased to report that since 2007 the amount of gas and electricity used by the Council had reduced year by year. The installation of energy efficient fittings and increased use of motion-sensors in Council buildings had led to a marked reduction in electricity consumption whilst improved insulation and draught proofing had reduced waste leading to reduced heating demands and lower gas consumption.

Next Councillor Sutcliffe asked if the Leader would publicly condemn Lancashire County Council's decision to close the Petre Arms Household Waste Recycling Centre.

The Leader confirmed that he had already placed on record the Council's disappointment at the County Council's decision to close the Petre Arms Household Waste Recycling Centre. He reported that in the last month, he had met with the County Cabinet Member concerned in order to discuss waste management issues and assured the Council that Lancashire County Council was fully aware of the Borough Council's concerns. Unfortunately, however, he had been advised that the decision would not be reversed.

Finally, Councillor Sutcliffe asked if the Council's priorities had changed in light of changed national financial circumstances. The Leader responded by saying that the Council had maintained a secure financial base for many years in order to ensure it could carry out its objectives and priorities as set out in its strategic

strategies and plans. Such a prudent approach enabled the Council to carefully consider the impact of any reductions in grant funding before potentially revising its priorities. Such reductions had already started with significant cuts, mainly in area based grants, and with anticipation of more to follow. He reported that the only impact for the Council so far had been the withdrawal of the Free Swimming Grant from the end of July and the deletion of the second tranche of the Performance Reward Grant.

He went on to state that the Coalition Government's emergency budget had indicated huge reductions in future public expenditure to reduce the national deficit. Precise details would probably not be known until October when the outcome of the Spending Review was announced. He assured Members that the Budget Working Group was being kept up to date as and when changes in Government funding were announced and would continue to closely monitor and agree financial priorities for the Council.

Councillor D Berryman asked if the Leader could confirm if the changing rooms at Roefield would be ready for the forthcoming football season.

The Leader confirmed that the new changing rooms would not be open at the beginning of the new season and that the football teams that used the pitches had been informed of the situation. The clubs concerned had been offered a revised pitch hire fee to reflect the limited facilities during construction and they had also been offered alternative arrangements if full facilities were needed. The contractual position was that the new changing rooms would be available for use in mid November but the contractor was making good progress and was currently ahead of programme so he was optimistic of an early handover.

Councillor Berryman also asked why the Council continued to circulate copies of every agenda as a printed copy to all Members.

The Leader thanked Councillor Berryman for his question and confirmed that the situation regarding copying and distribution of agenda papers had been kept under review since it had last been raised as an issue in October 2009. He outlined the difficulties and complexities in producing minutes and confirmed that current arrangements would remain in place. However, he reminded Members that staff continued to strive to reduce the size of agendas by reducing any non essential appendices and by including more web links to background papers/information rather than downloading lengthy documents and reprinting them in full. He welcomed any further suggestions from Members and asked that they contact the HR Manager with any ideas.

180

COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Community Committee – 18 May 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(ii) Planning and Development Committee – 20 May 2010

Consideration was given to a written question from Councillor J B Hill asking if the Chairman would comment on whether the decision by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to abolish the bureaucracy of regional strategies would also obviate the need for the Council to proceed any further with the process of developing a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. He also asked if the Planning Committee would support the exclusion of common ground when the necessary amendments were made to the emerging Local Development Framework if the abolition of regional strategies became law and the Localism Bill which was to be introduced later in the year.

The Chairman of Planning Committee, Councillor R Sherras, thanked Councillor Hill for his question and reminded Members that the Council had adopted the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in November 2009 following extensive consultation and that it formed part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and, as such, was an integral part of the strategic planning process in accordance with the guidance published by the Coalition Government.

He went on to say that the abolition of the regional strategies did not remove the need for the Council, as Local Planning Authority, to consider the development needs of the area and, indeed, it meant that the Council would need to identify for itself what the strategic needs were in terms of housing requirements. This was likely to put the Council under even greater pressure to accommodate more housing as developers would be able to promote their own evidence in support of sites.

The Chairman confirmed that Planning and Development Committee would consider a report on the Core Strategy at its next meeting. This was a key stage in formulating a new development plan for the area and included an intention to consult on a series of development options for the area. The public, including landowners, would have an opportunity in this statutory process to suggest how the development needs of the area could be accommodated. At this stage the Council would not be consulted on specific sites. The Chairman urged Members to contribute to the formulation of the Core Strategy.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(iii) Personnel Committee – 26 May 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(iv) Health and Housing Committee – 27 May 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(v) Policy and Finance Committee – 8 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of Minute No's 86 and 87.

MINUTE 86 – DUTY TO RESPOND TO PETITIONS

The Leader, Councillor M Ranson, asked Members to approve a petition scheme.

RESOLVED: That the petition scheme as outlined at Appendix A of Agenda Item 16 of Policy and Finance Committee held on 8 June 2010 be approved as outlined at Minute 86.

MINUTE 87 – REVISION OF GAMBLING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Leader, Councillor M Ranson, proposed that the revised Gambling Statement of Principles be approved.

RESOLVED: That the revised Gambling Statement of Principles be approved.

(vi) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 10 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(vii) Licensing Committee – 17 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(viii) Standards Committee – 16 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(ix) Planning and Development Committee – 17 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(x) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(xi) Accounts and Audit Committee – 29 June 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

The meeting closed at 7.28pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).