

Minutes of Meeting of the Full Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 18 December 2012 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor I Sayers (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	G Mirfin
J E Alcock	R Moores
R Bennett	R Newmark
S Bibby	E M H Ranson
I Brown	M Robinson
S Carefoot	J Rogerson
P Dowson	C Ross
R J Elms	G Scott
R Hargreaves	R E Sherras
J B Hill	D T Smith
T Hill	R Swarbrick
B Hilton	D Taylor
S A Hirst	M Thomas
J Holgate	R J Thompson
S Hore	N C Walsh
K Horkin	J White
A M Knox	A Yearling
S Knox	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Head of HR, Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

539 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend A Froud, opened the meeting with prayers.

540 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Brunskill, K Hind and L Rimmer.

541 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

542 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation.

543 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

544 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on events he had attended since the last meeting. This included a number of school visits, carol concerts and Christmas parties. He also gave an account of his participation with Guide Dogs for the Blind training. The Mayor had recently attended the Lancashire Best Kept Village Awards ceremony, where a number of local villages had received awards. He had also attended the retirement service for Bishop Nicholas at Blackburn Cathedral. Finally, the Mayor drew attention to a display of two pieces of specially commissioned artwork that were to be presented to the borough's two successful Olympic medallists – Samantha Murray and Jon Schofield at the Platform Gallery on Sunday, 23 December.

545 PETITION

The Mayor received a petition from Elizabeth Webbe regarding public toilets in Longridge. The petition had been signed by a wide range of people from the Longridge community. Councillor Ranson confirmed that the closure of toilets in Longridge had been referred back to Community Committee for further consideration.

546 DISPENSATION FOR COUNCILLORS

Consideration was given to the written report of the Chief Executive asking the Council to grant a general dispensation to all Members in respect of certain areas of the Council's business as outlined in Section 3.4 of his report, namely:

- setting the Council Tax or a precept;
- any allowance, travelling expense payment or indemnity for councillors;
- any matter relating to the housing or Council Tax benefit or the introduction of the new universal credit system where the councillor or councillor's spouse or partner receives, or was likely to receive, such a benefit.

RESOLVED: That a dispensation be granted to all Members in respect of matters set out at Section 3.4 of the main report.

547 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the written report of the Chief Executive asking for councillors to approve the appointment of a Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman for Planning and Development Committee following the indication from Councillor R Sherras that he intended to stand down from the role with effect from 18 December 2012. Members thanked Councillor Sherras for his significant contribution and commitment to the role of Chairman of Planning and Development Committee over the last 13 years.

RESOLVED: That Councillor T Hill and Councillor R Thompson be appointed as the new Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for Planning and Development Committee.

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LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by referring to the ongoing national economic pressures and informed Members that the Council would receive news in the next few days of what his financial assessment would be for the next financial year. This would enable the Council to finalise its budgets.

The Leader then reported on the visit of the parliamentary minister, Brandon Lewis to the Ribble Valley in November. The visit had been very successful and on the days of his visit, he announced the Council had been awarded a grant for £750,000 for the Council's waste collection service. This had come about as a result of a carefully constructed bid. Officers were now finalising how funds would be used which would include some capital purchases.

The Leader was pleased to report that the Warm Homes Healthy People scheme, which had been launched last year was now cited by the government as an example of best practice. The scheme was now to be relaunched and expanded to include a range of services to households across the borough. The scheme would give a valuable boost to vulnerable households facing fuel poverty and some elements were available to residents regardless of income.

The Leader drew attention to a Dementia Awareness event that had been held at The Grand in Clitheroe. The event has been organised by the Council, Age UK Lancashire, The Alzheimer Society and NHS East Lancashire. It had been targeted at family carers and community groups and its aim had been to raise awareness of the signs, symptoms, concerns and implications of dementia.

Finally, the Leader was delighted to report that once again parking charges were to be waived at Council operated car parks in Clitheroe and Longridge town centres on Saturdays in December. He hoped that shoppers from throughout Lancashire would take advantage of the free parking to visit the area and see what its unique independent shops had to offer. The Leader ended by thanking all officers and staff for their hard work and dedication throughout 2012.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the opposition, Councillor Allan Knox, asked how the Council intended to respond to the recent government announcement on fracking.

The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for this question. He confirmed that no fracking sites had been identified within the Ribble Valley but the Council would keep a watching brief upon developments. The Leader noted that the Council had no direct responsibilities or duties with regards to fracking, as the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Environment Agency would deal with licensing of operators and Lancashire County Council would deal with associated planning applications. The Leader also confirmed that Councillor Sayers would present a paper to Members on issues following a recent visit to LCC.

550 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Planning and Development Committee – 11 October 2012

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

(ii) Community Committee – 6 November 2012

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

(iii) Planning and Development Committee – 8 November 2012

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

(iv) Policy and Finance Committee – 20 November 2012

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of minute numbers 445, 446 and 448.

MINUTE 445 – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Leader, M Ranson, asked Members to approve the revised Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED: That the revised Financial Regulations be accepted.

MINUTE 446 – ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

The Leader of the Council, Councillor M Ranson, asked Members to approve an Armed Forces Community Covenant as circulated and approve the section 4 measures therein as outlined at Appendix 2 of the Covenant.

RESOLVED: That the Armed Forces Community Covenant and its contents be approved.

MINUTE 448 – LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX

The Leader, Councillor M Ranson, asked Members to approve a Council Tax Support Scheme with a maximum reduction of 8.5% in 2013/2014 and 12% thereafter.

RESOLVED: That the Council Tax Support Scheme and maximum reduction levels be approved.

(v) Personnel Committee – 21 November 2012

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

(vi) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 22 November 2012

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

(vii) Licensing Committee – 27 November 2012

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

(viii) Accounts and Audit Committee – 28 November 2012

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

(ix) Health and Housing Committee – 28 November 2012

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

(x) Planning and Development Committee – 6 December 2012

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

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

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