

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 15 December 2015, starting at 6pm
Present: Councillor B Hilton (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	S Hind
J E Alcock	S A Hirst
S Atkinson (6.05pm)	J Holgate
R Bennett (6.23pm)	S Hore
S Bibby	A M Knox
A Brown	S Knox
I Brown	G Mirfin
S Brunskill	R Newmark
S Carefoot	M Robinson
P M Dobson	J Rogerson
P Dowson	I Sayers
P Elms	R E Sherras
R J Elms	D T Smith
M Fenton	R Swarbrick
G Geldard	D Taylor
L Graves (6.35pm)	R J Thompson
R Hargreaves (6.07pm)	N C Walsh
T Hill	J White
K Hind (6.13pm)	

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

454 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, Monsignor Cocoran, opened the meeting with prayers.

455 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M French and G Scott.

456 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

457 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

458 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

459

MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on events that she had attended since the last meeting. She had attended some 62 engagements and highlighted 3 in particular. Firstly the Mayor's Ball which had been a great success and she thanked everyone who had supported the event.

Next she reflected on a Christmas Concert that had been held at Stonyhurst. This had been a very well attended event and had raised funds for the Mayor's Charity.

Finally the Mayor was delighted with a recent "Mayor's Question Time" event that had been held in the Council Chamber when 20 Year 2 children from Bolton-by-Bowland school had come along to ask questions of the Mayor. The children who had attended had written letters to the Mayor after the event to thank her for the opportunity to meet with her and to learn more about the Mayoralty and the Mayor highlighted some of the comments that the children had made.

460

LEADER'S SPEECH

The Leader began by reflecting on the budget process that was currently underway. He noted that the outturn for 2014/15 had been encouraging but that the Autumn Statement had confirmed the further grant reductions that the Council had anticipated. The Leader noted that whilst the Council knew that central grant funding would end, there was still no real clarity about the future of the New Homes Bonus or the business rate retention proposals. The Leader said that it was expected that the Council would achieve a balanced budget for 2015/16 but that projections for subsequent years indicated real difficulties, particularly in the context of dramatic County Council cuts and the disappearance of recycling credits in 2018.

The Leader was, however, pleased to report that it had been recently confirmed that the business rate pooling proposal put forward by 9 of the Lancashire authorities for the next financial year had been formally accepted by the Government and would mean that potentially an additional £400,000 could be coming to the borough in 2016/17. He was also pleased that the whole project was being led by Ribble Valley with the Director of Resources as Lead Officer for the Lancashire Business Rate Pool. The Leader extended his thanks to the Director of Resources and her team and the Budget Working Group for their hard work on managing the budget process.

The Leader went on to confirm that the first stage in the search for a development partner for the market site had now been agreed. This would represent a private sector investment of around £8m which it was hoped would then pump prime further levels of continuing investment and development in the town. This had also been complemented by the financial boost from the Tour of Britain; final figures from which showed that the Tour had resulted in a £1.5m return on investment for the borough.

Next the Leader reflected on the impact of the recent heavy rainfalls in the borough and reported that emergency procedures had been activated for Ribble Valley and in particular in Whalley, Ribchester and Sawley on 3 weekends out of the last 5. Troops from the 42nd Brigade had turned out to assist with the

emergency procedures and following a recommendation from Councillor White, the Leader reported that he would be formally writing to the Brigade to thank them for their help and assistance. He also expressed his thanks for the work of the Emergency Planning Officer and other colleagues for their professionalism and efforts in dealing with the situation. The Leader reported that a Government-led task group had been set up to look specifically at flood prone areas and that the Ribble Valley would be included in that.

Finally the Leader closed by wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

461 LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the opposition, Councillor A Knox, asked how the Council would be celebrating Christmas. The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for his question and confirmed that the provision of free parking in the town over the weekends in December had once again been introduced to improve customer numbers and help traders in the town. The Shadow Leader also pointed out that Christmas would not perhaps be such a happy time for those people who had been affected by floods, for some public sector workers who felt there was a degree of uncertainty regarding their jobs in respect of the level of Government cuts or for the 1 in 8 children in the borough who lived in poverty. The Leader agreed with the Deputy Leader's concerns and noted that the Council would continue to support its residents where it could and to continue to adopt a prudent approach to the Council's finances in order to effectively manage Government restrictions.

462 DEVELOPMENT OF A COMBINED AUTHORITY FOR LANCASHIRE

Consideration was given to the written report of the Chief Executive outlining the Governance Review that had been undertaken in respect of the move towards reaching agreement on a Combined Authority for Lancashire. The report included a draft report of the Lancashire Authorities Statutory Governance review and a draft scheme for a Combined Authority. The matter was debated and a number of Members spoke to the recommendations.

An amendment to the recommendations was proposed and seconded namely that a recommendation be added: "that from this period forward a permanent working group should be established, made up of Chairmen of Committees and a representative sample of other Members to scrutinise the progress of the work towards a Combined Authority".

The amendment was then put to the vote. There were 3 votes for the amendment and 35 votes against it. The amendment was therefore lost.

Members then voted on the substantive recommendations and a vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

RESOLVED: That the

1. report be noted;
2. contents of the Lancashire Governance Review and recommendations therein be noted;

3. contents of the draft Scheme for a Combined Authority be noted;
4. Council agree to take part in public consultation in January/February 2016 to seek views on the formation of a Combined Authority for Lancashire;
5. Council agree to consider feedback from that public consultation and note that those authorities who wished to form a Lancashire Combined Authority would then submit a proposal to the Secretary of State for consideration;
6. Council agreed in principle to becoming a constituent member of the Combined Authority for Lancashire; and
7. that final consideration to becoming a constituent member of a Lancashire Combined Authority would be dealt with at the Council's meeting on 26 April 2016.

463

RESPONSE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND CONSULTATION ON THE ELECTORAL REVIEW FOR LANCASHIRE

Consideration was given to the written report of the Director of Resources asking Members to approve the response to the draft recommendations on new electoral arrangements for Lancashire County Council as the response was set out at Appendix C to the report.

The report outlined proposals in respect of Electoral arrangements for Lancashire County Council and the impact of those proposals on the Ribble Valley at Division and Parish Council level. The report also included a proposed response to the draft recommendations that Members were asked to consider. The matter was debated and Councillor K Hind proposed an amendment to the recommendations to request that the matter be considered at a Public Inquiry conducted by an Independent Inspector, and that Nigel Evans MP be asked to draw this Council's response to the attention of Central Government.

RESOLVED: That the

1. Council respond to the Boundary Commission's report and indicate that they believed the County Council and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had under forecasted the number of electors in the borough by 2021;
2. Council agree to respond to the LGBCE on the draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Lancashire County Council as set out at Appendix C, amended to include a request that the matter be considered at an Inquiry by an Independent Inspector, and that the letter be copied to Nigel Evans MP with a request that he raise the matter with Central Government.

464 GAMBLING ACT 2005 - STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Consideration was given to the written report of the Chief Executive asking Members to consider and approve the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy – Gambling 2016 – 2019.

RESOLVED: That the Statement of Licensing Policy - Gambling 2016 – 2019 be approved.

465 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Community Committee – 13 October 2015

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

(ii) Planning and Development Committee – 15 October 2015

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

(iii) Personnel Committee – 21 October 2015

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

(iv) Health and Housing Committee – 22 October 2015

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

(v) Policy and Finance Committee – 27 October 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of Minute Numbers 388 and 389.

MINUTE 388 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Members were asked to approve that the minimum investment limits for approved banks and building societies be increased from £1.5m to £1.75m.

RESOLVED: That the increase in the maximum investment limits as outlined be approved.

MINUTE 389 – REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS ON CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

Members were asked to approve the revised financial regulations on contract procedure rules.

RESOLVED: That the revised Financial Regulations on Contract Procedure Rules be approved.

(vi) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 29 October 2015

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

(vii) Licensing Committee – 3 November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of Minute Number 419.

MINUTE 419 – STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY – LICENSING ACT 2003

Members were asked to approve adoption of a revised Statement of Licensing Policy.

RESOLVED: That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy be approved and adopted.

(viii) Planning and Development Committee – 12 November 2015

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

(ix) Accounts and Audit Committee – 18 November 2015

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

(x) Special Policy and Finance Committee – 30 November 2015

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

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

The meeting closed at 7.34pm.

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