

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 15 December 2020 (via ZOOM) starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Brunskill (Chairman)

Councillors:

J E Alcock	S A Hirst
S Atkinson	B Holden
A Austin	S Hore
R Bennett	A Humphreys
D Berryman	A M Knox
S Bibby	S Knox
D Birtwhistle	G Mirfin
A Brown	R Newmark
I Brown	D O'Rourke
R Buller	S O'Rourke
S Carefoot	D Peat
J Clark	S Rainford
S Fletcher	M Robinson
M French	J Rogerson
J Hill	G Scott
B Hilton	R E Sherras
M Hindle	R J Thompson

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

The meeting began with a minutes' silence in remembrance of Cllrs R Baxter, N Walsh and past Mayoress P Collis, who had died earlier this year.

859 PRAYERS

Father Heakin opened the meeting with prayers.

860 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Elms and J Schumann.

861 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

862 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

863 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 and the Extra Ordinary meeting held on 28 July 2020, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

864 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on a range of events that she had attended since the last meeting.

865 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by paying tribute to the contribution made by the late Councillor Ruth Baxter, Councillor Pam Dowson and Councillor Walsh to the work of the Council and their dedication to the communities they served.

The Leader reported on how the Council had responded to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the input of staff to keep essential services running. He had personally toured the Salthill Depot and the Council Offices in the Spring to thank all the staff for their dedication and commitment.

Council staff had been reorganised, refocused, redeployed to respond to the challenge. The Leader highlighted that:

- refuse teams had continued to collect the waste every week;
- the Finance team had processed and paid over £17 million in the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund;
- over 1500 people had been awarded Council Tax hardship payments;
- test and trace self-isolation payments had been administered;
- as the second wave of Covid 19 hit additional grants had been processed in 5 different schemes totalling £1.439 Million;
- staff had supported the creation of Community Hubs who supported over 2,000 residents in the first and second shielding; and
- additional staff have been appointed to support Test and Trace and Covid 19 enforcement.

Staff had achieved all the above and adhering to Covid-safe measures in the workplace and some remote working where possible.

The Leader wished to place on record both his and fellow Councillors' huge thanks and appreciation to all the staff for their commitment, flexibility, adaptability during the last 9 months.

At the same time the Council had also faced the prospect of reorganisation of Local Government in Lancashire. The Leader reported that he had met with the Minister

of Housing, Communities and Local Government and had been assured that the Ribble Valley would not be reorganised against its' will.

The Leader confirmed that the Government's detailed plans for devolution would be set out in the Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper and it was expected that that this would be published next year.

Returning to the Covid situation, the Leader reported that he had been selected to be part of the negotiating team to discuss the resources that Lancashire would need for testing, enforcement and business support with Downing Street.

He also reported that due to the social distancing rules and the rapid nature of decision making required, the Council had delegated decision making to the Chief Executive in consultation with himself and the Leader of the Opposition. The Emergency Committee had made this decision on the proviso that the Council return to the Committee system as soon as possible.

Finally, the Leader reported that the Council was getting ready to return to normal in the New Year with Committee cycles four and five and the relevant Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

Finally the Leader thanked all staff and Members for their support over the year and wished everyone best wishes for the Christmas season.

866

LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor A Knox, asked how much Covid-19 money had been distributed to Ribble Valley businesses and under what category, since the first lockdown began on 23 March.

The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for his question and confirmed that a total of just under £20 million had been paid out across the following categories:

	£
Small Business & Retail Hospitality & Leisure Grants	17.260m
Discretionary Grant Scheme	0.867m
Local Restrictions Support Grant – Open (Support for businesses during Tier 2)	0.408m
Local Restrictions Support Grant – Closed Addendum (Support for businesses during the national lockdown)	0.754m
Additional Restrictions Support Grant – (Support for business who may not be required to close or who may not have a business rate account but who have been severely impacted by the restrictions)	0.072m
Local Restrictions Support Grant – Closed (Support for businesses during the first period we entered Tier 3)	0.042m
Local Restrictions Support Grant – Closed (Support for businesses during the current period of Tier 3 restrictions)	0.163m
	19.566m

Next Councillor Knox asked if the Leader could confirm which Working Groups reported to Policy and Finance Committee.

The Leader confirmed that there were currently three Working Groups that reported to Policy and Finance Committee, namely: The Budget Working Group,

The Voluntary Organisation Grants Working Group and The Climate Change Working Group.

Finally, Councillor Knox asked how many households had been on the Council's waiting list in each of the last five years.

The Leader confirmed that the number of households on the waiting list was as follows:

2015/2016 – 956
2016/2017 – 1050
2017/2018 – 965
2018/2019 – 1032
2019/2020 – 969

867 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2021 – 2026

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive asking Committee to approve the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy for 2021-2026.

RESOLVED: That the Statement of Licensing Policy for 2021-2026 be approved.

868 COMMITTEE MINUTES

- (i) Emergency Committee – 9 March 2020
- (ii) Community Services Committee – 10 March 2020
- (iii) Planning and Development Committee – 12 March 2020

Councillor S Knox submitted a written question under Standing Order 10. Councillor Knox asked what procedures and protocols the Council had in place to quality check the advice given by statutory consultees in Planning applications.

The Chair of Planning and Development Committee thanked Councillor Knox for her question and Councillor A Brown, confirmed that there was no process in place to quality check the advice given per se as it was provided by experts in the field. However, any advice was weighed in balance by the authority when determining applications.

- (iv) Emergency Committee – 7 May 2020
- (v) Emergency Committee – 5 June 2020
- (vi) Planning and Development Committee – 25 June 2020
- (vii) Licensing Sub-Committee – 9 July 2020
- (viii) Licensing Sub-Committee – 10 July 2020
- (ix) Planning and Development Committee – 30 July 2020
- (x) Emergency Committee – 10 August 2020

- (xi) Licensing Sub-Committee – 26 August 2020
- (xii) Planning and Development Committee – 27 August 2020
- (xiii) Community Committee – 1 September 2020
- (xiv) Personnel Committee – 16 September 2020
- (xv) Planning and Development Committee – 24 September 2020
- (xvi) Special Planning and Development Committee – 30 September 2020
- (xvii) Health and Housing Committee – 1 October 2020
- (xviii) Licensing Sub-Committee – 6 October 2020
- (xix) Licensing Committee – 20 October 2020
- (xx) Planning and Development Committee – 29 October 2020
- (xxi) Economic Development Committee – 5 November 2020
- (xxii) Policy and Finance Committee – 17 November 2020

Councillor T Austin submitted a written question under Standing Order 10. He asked if the Leader would write to the Board of United Utilities on behalf of the Council, and request that United Utilities satisfy its legal obligation to provide an uninterrupted supply of fresh water to the whole village of Billington following the recent failure to supply 440 homes with such following a burst.

The Leader thanked Councillor Austin for his question and confirmed that he would write to United Utilities as requested.

- (xxiii) Emergency Committee – 25 November 2020
- (xxiv) Accounts and Audit Committee – 25 November 2020
- (xxv) Planning and Development Committee – 26 November 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meetings be received with the exception of Minute numbers 806, 807, 808 and 810

MINUTE 806 – Treasury Management Policies and Practices 2020/21

RESOLVED: That the Treasury Management Policies and Practices 2020/21 be approved.

MINUTE 807 – Capital and Treasury Management Strategy

RESOLVED: That the Capital and Treasury Management Strategy be approved.

MINUTE 808 – Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22

RESOLVED: That the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22 be approved.

MINUTE 810 – Adoption of Working Definition of Antisemitism

RESOLVED: That the Council adopt the Working Definition of Antisemitism.

The meeting closed at 7.38pm.

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