

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 28 January, 2010 at 6.30 p.m. at the Civic Offices, Telford.

PRESENT:

Councillors I.T.W. Fletcher (Speaker), D.G. Allen, G. Ashcroft, D.W.D. Ashley, R.K. Austin, R. Aveley, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell (Mayor), S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, R.G. Chaplin, E.A. Clare, , N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade (Leader), V.A. Fletcher, J.A. Francis, G.M. Green, E.J. Greenaway, R.E. Groom, Y.C. Hicks, P.A.E. Homer, T.J. Hope, J.C. Minor, M.B. Hosken, G.P. Hossell, S.M. Kelly, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, L. Lomax, A.A. Mackenzie, C.N. Mason, A.D. McClements, A.A. Meredith, C.P.R. Mollett, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, J.M. Seymour, C.F. Smith, M.J. Smith, A.J. Stanton, E.M. Swift, , W.L. Tomlinson, R.M. Tyler, D.R.W. White, A.G.P. Williams, H.J. Williams and D.G. Wright

69. COUNCILLOR UTE SAMBROOK

The Speaker asked Members to stand for two minutes' silence in tribute to Councillor Ute Sambrook following her death on 13 December 2009. He then invited Members to pay their individual tributes to Councillor Sambrook.

Councillor S. Bentley, Cabinet Member: Active Lifestyles - Leisure & Culture, paid a personal tribute. He described Councillor Sambrook as a great friend and a special person who had made an impact on many people's lives. He told Members that Councillor Sambrook had been a compassionate and generous person who had always put others before herself. Councillor Bentley urged Members to support the campaign to ensure more resources were devoted to the early diagnosis of cancer. Councillor R.K. Austin paid tribute to Councillor Sambrook's service to the Council, both as an employee and as a Councillor. Members from all political groups then provided further tributes to Councillor Sambrook. Although deeply saddened by the loss of their colleague, they paid warm tribute to her outstanding honesty, commitment, determination and dedication.

70. PRAYERS

The Reverend Nigel Young, Vicar of Christ the King Chapel led Members in prayer.

71. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Borough Council held on 26 November, 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Speaker.

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors J.A. Dixon, K.L. Tomlinson and V. Tonks.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, N.A. Dugmore, M.B. Hosken, C.N. Mason, C.P.R. Mollett, R.A. Overton, K.S. Sahota, H.J. Williams, A.G.P. Williams and D.R.W. White declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 10, the Recommendation from Cabinet (2009/10 Financial Monitoring report).

74. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor briefly updated Members on her recent engagements. She highlighted her attendance at Harper Adams University College for the visit of HRH Princess Royal. She also drew particular attention to her engagements in Dawley and Oakengates to switch on the Christmas lights and her attendance at a Celebration of Music event at Abraham Darby Academy. Members noted the engagements undertaken by the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor between 19th November, 2009 and 16th January 2010.

75. REPORT OF LEADER

The Leader referred to the election of the Deputy Mayor at May's Annual General meeting. He told Members that he understood that the wife of one of the candidates, Mrs S. Sahota, had been adversely affected by the outcome of events at that meeting. The Leader explained to Members that Mrs Sahota was highly regarded by the local community and that he wished to apologise to Mrs Sahota for any embarrassment that may have been caused to her and her community..

The Leader also informed Members of the proposed new Southwater redevelopment. The joint scheme with the Southwater Event Group would be kick-started by the development of new Civic Offices. Future plans included the development of a leisure infrastructure together with service, retail and conference business. There was an opportunity for Telford to become a conference town which could attract an estimated 250,000 visitors to the town. He told Members that the sale of the existing Civic Offices building would allow the Council to build new offices at no cost to the taxpayer. Staying in the existing building would be economically negligent as the cost of maintaining the building would continue to spiral. He looked forward to working with ASDA and challenged Hark Apollo to become involved with the proposed redevelopment.

He reminded Members of the ongoing work to regenerate the Borough Towns and South Telford estates. He also told Members of plans to set up a Task

force to tackle the problem of young people who were not involved in either education or training. Cabinet would be monitoring and reviewing the progress of major investments on a monthly basis. Services, roads and green spaces would be targeted for future improvement. He acknowledged that this was an ambitious agenda; restructuring was taking place in order to allow delivery of the Council's priorities. The ambition was to deliver growth to benefit the whole Borough.

76. CABINET DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Members received the report on the Cabinet decisions made since the last meeting of the Council on 26 November, 2009.

Councillor J.M. Seymour, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Adult Care & Support, drew Members' attention to the Adult Social Services Performance Rating 2009. This rating showed the commitment, dedication and high quality work being done in this area. Councillor A. Lawrence, Cabinet Member: Environment & Rural Area, thanked all staff and partners involved in salting and gritting roads during the recent cold weather. He also took the opportunity to inform Members of a new initiative, 'Potholes Busters' which aimed to provide a faster response on repairing potholes in the Borough.

Councillor E.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity was asked whether Scrutiny would have an involvement in the make up of any Project Board to deal with the new Civic Offices development. He informed Members that Cabinet had the authority to decide the make up of the Project Board but that there was certainly an important role for scrutiny to play and he agreed to report back to Members with details of this process.

77. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET

12 January, 2010 – 2009/10 Financial Monitoring

Councillor S.M. Kelly, Cabinet Member: Efficient Community Focussed Council presented the report of the Head of Finance.. Councillor Kelly told Members that the report, received by Cabinet on 12 January, showed overall revenue spending projected within approved budgets and also provided an update on capital programme spending. In addition, the report highlighted a number of virements, new capital allocations and slippage which required formal approval by Council

RESOLVED - that approval be given for the new capital allocations and slippage and the revenue and capital virements detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the attached report.

78. SETTING OF THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2010/11

Councillor S.M. Kelly, Cabinet Member: Efficient Community Focussed Council presented the report of the Head of Finance which requested Council to determine the Council Tax Base for General and Special Fund purposes for the financial year 2010/11.

In order to determine the appropriate Council Tax levels for the borough it was necessary for the Council to determine the tax base for its area or part of its area. The budget requirements of the various precepting authorities were divided by this figure to arrive at the Band D equivalent level of Council Tax.

The determining of the tax base had to be set between 1st December and 31st January in relation to 2010/11 as prescribed by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended. The figures used for the tax base allowed for the continuation of the resolutions in respect of reducing the discounts for empty properties and second homes agreed previously.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the calculation of the tax base for 2009/10, as shown at paragraph 5.6 and Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;
- (b) That, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the amount calculated for Telford & Wrekin Council Tax Base for 2010/11 for its special fund area shall be as per the appropriate parish amounts detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

79. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- (i) Councillor V.A. Fletcher, Chairman of Licensing Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December, 2009 which contained a number of recommendations to Council.

RESOLVED: That Council approve:

- (a) The revocation of the existing byelaws known as ‘District of The Wrekin Council Granville Country Park Local Nature Reserve Byelaws’ as shown at Appendix A on the site shown at Appendix B as attached to the report;
- (b) The re-application of the Byelaws to the whole of the site known as “Granville Country park Local Nature Reserve” as shown at Appendix C as attached to the report.

- (ii) The Speaker, as Chairman of the Council Constitution Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December, 2009, which contained a number of recommendations to Council.

At this point The Leader told Members that, in respect of the proposed Health Monitoring Committee he was of the view that the existing all party arrangements worked well and that he would like to retain this for the present time. He was also aware that there may be an issue with the proposed Committee's work overlapping with that of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. It was moved and seconded that the proposals to establish a Health Monitoring Committee be deferred. Following a vote, the proposal to defer was approved.

RESOLVED: That Council approve:

- (a) **The proposed changes to the Constitution to create a Dispensations Sub-Committee, and the addition of the Terms of Reference for the sub-committee, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report, to Part 2, Article 9 of the Constitution subject to the first Term of Reference being amended by the insertion of the words 'and members of other relevant authorities' after the words 'members of the authority';**
- (b) **The proposed changes to the Constitution to establish a Health Monitoring Committee and the addition of Terms of Reference for the Committee, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report, with proposed amendments shown below, are deferred.**
- (i) **The first Term of Reference being amended to read:**
"To gather information and consider the implications of any local health reviews that affect the Borough and the implications for people in Telford & Wrekin";
- (ii) **The second Term of Reference, as set out in the report, being deleted;**
- (iii) **The third Term of Reference being amended to read "...to report findings and *make* recommendations to Cabinet";**
- (iv) **That the Membership of the Committee be amended to include the Cabinet Member with responsibility for issues relating to the NHS and the Telford & Wrekin Primary Care Trust.**

80. FAIRTRADE STATUS: PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor V.A. Fletcher presented the report of the Head of Planning and Transport which updated Members on progress achieved.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

81. MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Council noted the resolved minutes of the Plans Board for 4 and 25 November, 7 and 16 December, 2009, of the Licensing Committee of 12 and 18 November, 8, 15 and 17 December, 2009, of the Audit Committee of 3 November, 2009, of the Scrutiny Leadership Board of 19 November, 2009, of the Council Constitution Committee of 8 December 2009 and of the Standards Committee of 10 December, 2009.

82. QUESTIONS

The following Questions were asked in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10:

a) Councillor C.F. Smith had submitted the following question:

“Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration give a list of all the sites considered for a New Civic Offices and inform Council of the detailed evaluation process?”

Councillor E.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity, responded:

“The information will be provided as part of the Scrutiny Call-In process.”

b) Councillor L. Lomax had submitted the following question:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People inform Council whether he has had any response to his request for a £1,000 contribution from each Council portfolio (now priority area) towards the work of the Care Council?”

Councillor S.P. Burrell, Cabinet Member: Children & Young People responded:

“Yes, I have, and I would like to thank those areas for the contributions.”

c) Councillor G. Ashcroft had submitted the following question:

“To what extent have the May 2006 findings by the CSR Partnership contained in the report: ' South Telford and other West Midlands Housing Estates. A Comparative Study ' influenced the approach of the current administration to Brookside Ward and in particular point 9.16 that states that, unless urgent remedial action is taken, the worst areas will become 'effectively no go areas for most residents ?”

Councillor E.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity, responded:

“This report was written in 2006, Woodside, Sutton Hill and Brookside were in need of repair at that time. Schemes are coming in to improve the Brookside area and we are working hard with local people to improving the lives of all people in that area. Brookside has not been forgotten, £2m has been earmarked for a new shopping centre, and work is taking place to identify a site for this development. A further £2m has been put aside for a shopping centre in Sutton Hill. There is a lot to do around the Borough in terms of regeneration and, regrettably, only so much can be done at one time.”

Councillor G. Ashcroft:

“Is it not time for spending on the physical regeneration of Brookside?”

Councillor E.J. Carter responded:

“We can not do everything at the same time; there are a large number of regeneration schemes underway throughout the Borough. I would refer you to my previous answer and ask that you be patient.”

d) Councillor H. Rhodes had submitted the following question:

“It has recently been announced that a new Regeneration Partnership is to be set up for Oakengates. Would the Cabinet Member for Regeneration tell Members whether the existing Partnership has been wound up, and if so, have all the members of that Partnership been kept fully informed? ”

Councillor E.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity, responded:

“The Borough Council and Town Council had no faith in the original partnership and thus decided to withdraw from the partnership. I understand that all Members of the partnership have been informed. Obviously, I would apologise if any members of the partnership were not informed. I will provide a copy of the relevant correspondence..”

e) Councillor H.J. Williams had submitted the following question:

“Since the recent cold spell, many dangerous pot holes have appeared throughout the borough. What is the Council doing to address this problem and resolve it quickly to stop any further deterioration of the roads and to reduce the possibility of compensation claims?”

Councillor Williams asked that her question be withdrawn in the light of information provided earlier in the meeting.

f) Councillor E.A. Clare had submitted the following question:

“Has the Council secured a lease agreement with The Canal Trust regarding the purchase of property at Wappenshall? “

Councillor E.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity, responded:

“Yes, this was completed on 23 June 2009”

Councillor E.A. Clare then asked the following question:

“Does the Lease cover the costs of £10k a year?”

Councillor E.J. Carter responded:

“I will provide a written answer.”

83. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Councillor C.F. Smith, with the meeting’s consent, asked permission for the following motion to be withdrawn:

‘This Council agrees that any Member Project Boards which are established to deliver the Town Centre, Southwater Regeneration and the relocation of the Civic Offices will be representative of the membership of the whole Council.’

Councillor Smith asked that Council agree the motion be withdrawn. This was proposed, seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED – that the Motion be withdrawn

The meeting ended at 8.11 p.m.

Speaker:

Date: