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BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 12 July, 2012 at 6.30 p.m. at the Civic Offices, Telford.

PRESENT:

Councillors K.R. Guy (Mayor), S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, B.H. Duce, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, C.B.A. Elliott, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, E.J. Greenaway, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhawar, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, J. Loveridge, A.A. Mackenzie, C.N. Mason, A.D. McClements, W.A.M. McClements, A.A. Meredith, J.C. Minor, C.P.R. Mollett, L.A. Murray, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, A.J. Stanton B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

16. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Meeting of the Council and the Special Meeting of the Council held on 24 May, 2012, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors R.K. Austin, F.M. Bould, D.G. Davies, R.C. Evans and M.J. Smith

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

19. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Co-operation agreement between Telford & Wrekin Council and Telford & Shropshire Asian Business Association (TSABA).

The Leader asked Members to note the recently signed co-operation agreement between the Borough Council and TSABA which aimed to encourage businesses to promote Fairtrade products and to provide opportunities for businesses to use Fairtrade products. Councillor V.A. Fletcher gave members more information on the agreement and spoke in support of the principles of Fairtrade. Sherrell Fikeis, representing TSABA, thanked Members for their support.

- b) Leader's Report

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The Leader told Members that Councillor Keith Austin, who had recently been taken seriously ill, had now returned home after a spell in hospital. The Leader, together with all Members, wished Councillor Austin a speedy recovery. The Olympic torch had recently passed through the town where 40,000 people had turned out to celebrate the event. The Leader thanked the people of the Borough for their contribution to such a memorable and momentous day.

The Leader reminded Members that central funding for Local Councils was shrinking and that Councils would need to look at new ways of providing services and new income streams. He told Members that the Council would shortly be advertising for Commercial Enterprise Manager in the near future, someone who would bring the skills and experience needed to help bring businesses and jobs in to the town. At a Borough level the Leader noted some current achievements:

- Ironbridge Park & Ride facility had now opened
- Ice Rink refurbishment had commenced
- Hadley & Oakengates regeneration commenced
- Brookside regeneration
- Contractor appointed for next years Ercall School build
- Small Business Loans fund

The Leader also told Members he had attended the Queen's Jubilee celebrations at RAF Cosford and that everyone involved had enjoyed a wonderful day.

20. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor asked Members to note his recent engagements and the final engagements undertaken by the outgoing Mayor. He told Members that he intended to change the emphasis of this part of the meeting and would look to focus mainly on informing Members of upcoming events and engagements.

Earlier in the day the Mayor, together with a number of other Council members had attended the Queen's Jubilee celebrations at RAF Cosford. The Mayor told Members that all concerned had had a wonderful day, especially the many young people who were in attendance. He paid tribute to Psyche Hudson, Arts & Culture Manager and all of those involved in the excellent organisation of the event. Members were also reminded that that the Ironbridge Festival was due to take place in September.

21. 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 3 May, 2012.

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Referring to the Waste Management Services Procurement report from 31 May Cabinet, Councillor N.A. Dugmore asked what other models had been considered and whether detailed figures could be provided. Councillor S. Davies Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services & Co-operative Council, replied that the Council was working closely to ensure that any contract was fit for purpose and provided the best deal. Councillor A.J. Eade was concerned about income generation in relation to the Waste Management Service and asked whether the Leader would put all procurement and contract work on hold so that all options could be properly considered. The Leader replied that procurement work would not be put on hold. Councillor S.P. Burrell, referring to the report on Planning School Places from 26 April Cabinet asked about the future vision for Pupil Referral Units. Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, replied that the review was ongoing and that all options were being considered.

22. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET

28 June 2012 Cabinet

Financial Monitoring Outturn Report

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Resources & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Information Governance which sought approval for the Revenue outturn position and related virements and Capital outturn position and delegated authority for the Managing Director to approve bids against the Capacity & Environmental Works reserves. In addition, the report presented information on performance against income targets for noting by Council. The Council faced further financial pressures next year, particularly due to the increasing cost of providing Adult Social Care.

The gross revenue budget for 2011/12 was £409m and the net budget for reporting purposes was just over £129m. Revenue outturn position. The main pressures experienced were:

- The cost of Adult Social Care purchasing - a net overspend of £0.993m which was after offsetting other funding available from vacancies and one off reserves and additional NHS grants against the impact of the PCT's withdrawal of funding for some cases of continuing healthcare needs and the use of one off balances available in 2011/12. Most of the cost of supporting these people then falls on the Council. It also takes into account the £0.490m one off winter pressure funds announced by the Government in early January.
- The cost of Children in Care – an overspend of £1.5m relating to both placements and the use of agency workers
- The cost of Specialist Education – an overspend of £0.664m relating to stated provision

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- Income shortfalls – a shortfall of £1.9m, the majority relating to PIP rentals, planning fees, building control fees and school meals income.

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson suggested that he would be happy to be part of a joint delegation from Telford & Wrekin that could go to London to lobby against the budget cuts which had disproportionately affected Local Councils. Councillor Sahota welcomed the idea of a joint delegation from all political groups. Councillor McClements noted that the Borough was subsidising other authorities with regard to the collection of Business Rates and thought that a joint delegation was a good way of raising this issue with government. Councillor A.R.H. England thought that any delegation might include the Shropshire & Telford Trades Union Council in order to demonstrate broader support against budget cuts.

RESOLVED that Council:

- a) Approve the Revenue outturn position and related virements in Appendix III for 2011/12 which is subject to audit by the Council's external auditors. This includes the following transfers into provisions and reserves: £2.145m to support the 12/13 budget strategy; £1m to create an Invest to Save Fund (including the £0.5m approved in February's financial monitoring); £0.330m to support Council Wide Capacity/Training; £1.5m to fund severance costs associated with the delivery of ongoing revenue savings; £0.400m to address Environmental issues.**
- b) Delegate authority to approve bids against the Capacity and Environmental works reserves to the Managing Director after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Service Delivery.**
- c) Approve the Capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates, virements and re-phasing shown in Appendix IV as summarised in the report.**
- d) Note performance against income targets**

23. THE MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT & NEW ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

Councillor R.A. Overton, Deputy Leader with Special Responsibility for Borough Town Development & Policy presented the report of the Monitoring Officer which considered final arrangements for the new Standards regime at the Borough Council in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and regulations made under the Act which had come in to force since this matter had last been considered by Council on 3 May 2012.

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RESOLVED –

That Council endorse the decisions made on the 3rd May 2012 to:

- 1.1 Create a Standards Committee and a Hearings Sub Committee, (approving the terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1) to come into effect immediately;
- 1.2 Approve the Code of Conduct for adoption (as attached at Appendix 2 of this report) as the Council's Code of Conduct to come into effect immediately;

and that Council :

- 1.3 Approve the payment of an allowance of £3,935 to the Chairman of the Standards Committee
- 1.4 Approve the arrangements for the investigation of allegations and for decisions on allegations to be made as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report:
- 1.5 Consider the appointment of the Independent Person at its next meeting on 13th September 2012.

24. FAIRTRADE PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor C.B.A. Elliott presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Housing which provided an update on the Council's Fairtrade activities during 2011/12. Councillor Elliott told the meeting that the Council had promoted a number of successful Farmer's markets. Councillor V.A. Fletcher spoke in support of the report and of a number of Fairtrade activities which had taken place during the year. She was very proud of the achievement made so far by raising awareness and working with partners.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

25. MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Council noted the resolved minutes of Boards and Committees:

Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee	23 April
Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee	19 April
Health Scrutiny Committee	14 March
Plans Board	25 April, 16 & 30 May and 20 June
Scrutiny Management Board	18 April, 14 May and 16 May

26. QUESTIONS

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

a) Councillor G.C.W. Reynolds:

“Could the Leader please confirm the level of expenses claimed by the Labour administration last year, compared with the Conservative administration the previous year?”

Councillor K.S. Sahota, Leader of the Council, replied that for 2010/11 the Conservative administration had claimed £11297.25 whilst for 2011/12 the Labour administration had claimed £1559.52 in expenses. Councillor Reynolds asked whether these figures showed that the Labour administration had a better understanding of cuts in funding. Councillor Sahota replied that this was the case and that his administration wanted to show people that they understood and that they cared.

b) Councillor S. Bentley:

“Following the excellent call-in debate on the Waste Procurement Process, for which I thank the Chairman and Scrutiny Management Board, Councillor Davies gave assurances to both myself and colleagues that the process would now continue with full impartial involvement of Scrutiny Members, cross-party – will you now, please re-affirm this to the Chamber ?”.

Councillor S. Davies replied that Cabinet and Scrutiny Management Board had affirmed that the Scrutiny would happen but that Scrutiny itself would decide issues with the Scrutiny work programme. Councillor Bentley hoped that Scrutiny would look at any proposed contract, consider alternatives and recommend a better path.

27. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Councillor K.S. Sahota, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, moved the following Motion:

“The Co-operative Values and Communication sub-group developed proposals earlier this year for a set of Co-operative values for the Council, the wider community and partners. Those proposals were endorsed by Cabinet on 26 April. The values are:

Ownership

We will – be accountable for our own actions and empower people with the skills to help themselves.

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We would like everyone to – take action and responsibility for themselves and their community to the best of their abilities.

Openness & Honesty

We will – be open and honest in the way we work and make decisions and communicate in a clear, simple and timely way.

We would like everyone to – be open and honest about what they want to improve in their community.

Involvement

We will – work together with the community, involve people in decisions that affect their lives and be prepared to listen and take on new ideas.

We would like everyone to – work with and support others, get involved and share their views to help us develop the way we do things.

Fairness & Respect

We will – respond to people’s needs in a fair and consistent way.

We will and would like everyone to – respect and care for themselves and others, value the different ideas and skills that people bring and treat each other as equals.

This Council supports and endorses these Co-operative values and will apply those values in its work for the benefit of the citizens of this Borough.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor R. A. Overton.

A number of Members commended the motion, strongly supporting the principles and ethos of the Co-operative values.

A recorded vote was requested and the votes were as follows:

For (31): K.T. Blundell, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, B.H. Duce, C.B.A. Elliott, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, J. Loveridge, A.A. Mackenzie, C.N. Mason, A.D. McClements, W.A.M. McClements, J.C. Minor, L.A. Murray, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, G.C.W. Reynolds, S. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling

Against (17): S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, E.J. Greenaway, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, A. Stanton.

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved

- b) Councillor S.P. Burrell, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, moved the following Motion:

“This Council recognises the vital role played by scrutiny and is fully committed to supporting the pivotal work carried out by scrutiny and ensuring that all reasonable resources and expertise are made available to the commissions and management board to assist in the fulfilment of their function.

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This Council therefore commits to review the composition of the scrutiny commissions and management board with the intention of increasing their membership by one to include a professional co-optee with expertise relevant to the remit of the commission concerned.“

Councillor Burrell told Members that Scrutiny were disadvantaged in holding Cabinet to account due to a lack of independent professional advice. An independent co-optee working with each Scrutiny Committee would benefit the Scrutiny service. Councillor D.R.W. White, Chairman of Scrutiny Management Board, noted that each Committee could call upon volunteers to assist with Scrutiny work at any time. Councillor W.L. Tomlinson did not believe there was a need for permanent co-optees. He encouraged all Members to engage and participate more actively with the Scrutiny process.

The motion was seconded by Councillor S. Bentley.

A vote was taken and it was:

RESOLVED – That the motion not be approved

The meeting ended at 8.04 pm

Mayor:

Date: