

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 17 July, 2014 at 6.30 p.m. at The Place, Oakengates, Telford.

PRESENT:

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, S.P. Burrell, E.C. Carter, E.A. Clare, D.G. Davies, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, R.C. Evans, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, E.J. Greenaway, K.R. Guy, A.S. Jhavar, 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 (Deputy Leader), F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan (Deputy Speaker), C.F. Smith, M.J. Smith (Mayor), A.J. Stanton, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

The Mayor opened the meeting, and reported that, in the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker would be chairing the remainder of the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 8 May 2014 and of the Annual Council meeting held on 29 May 2014, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors, F.M. Bould, C.B.A. Elliott, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken and M.G. Ion (Speaker)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors S. Davies, A.R.H. England and K.S. Sahota declared a pecuniary interest in item 2.2.8 of the Cabinet Decision report, Update on Dawley Social & Memorial Club, shown at Appendix C on the agenda.

Councillor R.C. Evans declared a pecuniary interest in item 2.2.3 of the Cabinet Decision report, Domiciliary Care Preferred Provider Frameworks, shown at Appendix C on the agenda.

4. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Leader's Report

The Leader told the meeting that the council had secured over £10m for infrastructure improvements across the borough. Nearly £4m to develop the T54 industrial area off the M54 and a further £1.3m for the redevelopment of Telford's

bus station. Later in the evening Full council would be asked to back plans for permission to borrow up to £120m to support the bid for the MoD Donnington logistics hub. If successful this would secure more than 1,000 jobs and create up to 700 new jobs, generating an extra £60m a year for the local economy. The council was also seeking to borrow a further £50m to build 425 homes for rent. This would help to provide a much needed boost to the rental market including many affordable homes. This would also provide a further boost to regeneration and an investment for the Council that could generate extra money to help protect local services. This was another example of the council's commitment to good capital borrowing. Projects, such as the Solar farm, MOD Donnington logistics hub and building homes would pay back borrowing and generate a surplus that would provide extra funding for key frontline services.

Earlier in the week the Southwater One building had opened, accommodating the Council's First Point customer services, new central library, as well as a new coffee shop. A new cinema, restaurants and hotel would be opening over the next few weeks creating 450 new jobs. T-Party was scheduled for 2 August, a day of free fun for all the family. The Leader had also attended the recent 'Drive-In movie'. Both nights had been a great success and the council planned to repeat this initiative for Halloween. Later in the summer, T-Live would return for two nights, further reinforcing the message that the Borough was a place that people wanted to visit. Securing employment opportunities for local people remained a priority for this Council and in particular tackling high youth unemployment. The new Job Box mentor scheme offering 20-24 year olds with one-to-one advice in their job search had been operating for past 6 weeks. Work was progressing well to rebuild and refurbish the secondary schools across Telford and Wrekin. Work had started at Holy Trinity Academy in Priorslee and the new sports hall and student facilities at Southall School had officially opened in the previous week. Ercall Wood would open its brand new school building for the new academic year in September. The council welcomed the expansion of local company, CML Fulfilment & Logistics. CML was a huge success story for the borough, growing from a small company employing 15 people into a thriving and fast growing business with a workforce of more than 160. The Pride in Our Community project was also generating successful local initiatives for the Borough.

5. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor presented the Royal Town Planning Institute Certificate to Michael Barker, Assistant Director: Planning Specialist. The certificate had recently been awarded to the council for the Borough's special contribution to the evolution of the science and art of special planning and all that was involved with the development of thriving communities.

Members received the report of Mayoral engagements undertaken since the last meeting of the council on 1 May 2014.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The following public question had been received under Council Procedure Rules 7.11 and 7.12.

Mr. V. Rainsford asked the following question of Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing Development and Borough Towns.

“Have the Council purchased the following sites 504 Donnington Farm, Muxton and site 351, site 88 Wellington Road, Muxton, and if so do you intend to sell them on to the Developers for a profit to allow for the Development of houses adjoining Breton Park as in the Shaping Places Document?”

The Cabinet Member replied that the council did not own and had never owned this land. The council did own some land in Muxton but not at the sites referred to in the question. Comments would be taken in to account as part of any future planning application.

7. 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.

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services & Employment and Skills, referred to the Telford Loyalty Card report. He noted that 60629 cards had been issued in the first year, a 15% increase when compared with the old Flex card. By July 2014 take up had risen to 67254, one third of the Borough's residents. A new Smartphone app allowing customers to access more offers would soon be available. Local attractions and businesses could be promoted and a TLC zone had been opened in partnership with Parish councils.

Councillor A England updated members on the progress towards the domiciliary care preferred provider frameworks. Councillor A.J. Eade referred to the Domiciliary Care Preferred Provider Frameworks.

Councillor E.J. Greenaway, referring to the Scrutiny review of Primary School Places, asked what changes to current plans would be made in order to ensure the Borough did not run out of school places by 2018 due to the increase in new homes in the Borough. Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, replied that there was no crisis and that the report indicated that the council had planned well enough. Developments would be monitored and future plans would accommodate population changes across the Borough.

Councillor K.L. Tomlinson, referring to Domiciliary Care Preferred Provider Frameworks, asked the Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care, whether, as a result of tenders received, emergency care services would be provided within the area. Councillor England agreed to provide a written response.

Councillor N.A. Dugmore, referring to the Scrutiny review of Empty Properties, asked the Cabinet Member: Housing Development and Borough Towns, when the 500 or so empty homes in the Borough would be brought back in to use and how many empty property development orders had been served in the last 3 years.

Councillor C.F. Smith replied that empty properties were closer to 400 not 500 and that the Housing Options scheme had only recently began in early July. 13 landlords had signed up and work was beginning to bring properties back in to use. Councillor Dugmore should ask the question in September once the scheme had been operating for a while. Councillor Smith agreed to provide a written response on empty property development orders.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET

a) 2013/14 Out-turn and Initial Monitoring for 2014/15 (26 June 2014)

Councillor W.A. McClements, Cabinet Member: Resources & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance which outlined the Revenue out-turn position and related virements and Capital position for 2013/14.

At least £10m-£13m savings would be required each year for the next 3 years. £53m of ongoing savings had already been delivered by the Borough, £11m in the last year.

£4.884m had been generated from back-dating the change in treatment of the calculation of the Minimum Revenue Provision and had been transferred to reserves in accordance with agreed service and financial planning strategy for 2014/15 to fund debt charges for the Pride in Your Community initiative. £1.546m arising from treasury management activities had been generated and £1.5m savings had been generated from close management of employee budgets. Pressures had arisen from £2.9m overspend in Adult Social Services and £1.4m overspend on Children's Safeguarding.

Councillor A.J. Eade noted that the main opposition group alternative budget had contained a provision of £2m to cushion the effects of budget reductions on the Adult Social Care budget. He was pleased that this was reflected in the council's financial planning.

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson acknowledged the difficulties arising from unprecedented budget reductions but noted that he would have preferred less to be spent on the Pride in Our Community project and more on Adult Social Care.

Councillor V.A. Fletcher asked for an update on continuing healthcare costs. Councillor McClements replied that progress was being made and that he would be able to give a fuller answer at the end of the year. Changes would be made in the face of huge budget reductions in order to protect front line services.

A vote was then taken, and it was

RESOLVED that -

- i) the Revenue out-turn position and related virements for 2013/14, shown in Appendix 3 of the report (and subject to audit by the Council's external auditors); the transfer to reserves detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report; and the earmarking of the 2013/14 general**

contingency as a specific draw-down budget available to Adult Social Services in 2014/15 be approved;

(ii) the Capital out-turn position and related supplementary estimates, virements and re-phasing, shown in Appendix 4 of the report, be approved;

b) Protecting Jobs in the Borough: Development of a Logistics Hub at MOD Donnington (10 July 2014)

Councillor W.A. McClements, Cabinet Member: Resources & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Director: Development, Business & Customer Service which provided an update on the MOD's logistics commodities and services (transformation) project and sought approval for the council to fund, on a commercial basis, the development of the logistics hub at MOD Donnington.

Councillor McClements told the meeting that this was the biggest issue for discussion by council in many years. The project was worth up to £60m a year to the local economy. Telford was a growth point for the UK economy and this project would build on existing success, safeguarding more than 1000 jobs.

A number of councillors spoke on this report. Councillor A.J. Eade supported the decision but requested that, due to the level of debt exposure, a full business case be presented to full council. Councillor W.L. Tomlinson felt that concerns over debt exposure were scaremongering as draw down of funding rested with the delivery partner and MOD guaranteeing a lease payment if default occurred within the contract or under the lease or finance agreement. Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher felt that the full business case for this borrowing should go to Audit Committee for review.

Councillor McClements thanked councillors for their support for the project. In response to a question he confirmed that the benefits of the Railfreight terminal were known to bidders. He believed that it was essential that the council committed to this project.

A recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For: (49)

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, S.P. Burrell, E.C. Carter, E.A. Clare, D.G. Davies, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, R.C. Evans, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, E.J. Greenaway, K.R. Guy, 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 (Deputy Leader), F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan (Deputy Speaker), C.F. Smith, M.J. Smith (Mayor) , A.J. Stanton, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

and it was

RESOLVED - that the investment as outlined in the report and the approval of prudential borrowing of up to £120 million to fund this commercial investment, and all associated changes to the capital programme, be approved.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARDS & COMMITTEES

a) Treasury Management – 2013/14 Annual Report and 2014/15 to Date

Councillor R.K. Austin, Vice Chairman of Audit Committee, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance which sought approval for the increases in authorised and operational limits for 2014/15 to facilitate the council to potentially undertake very significant capital regeneration investments of a commercial nature and to approve other changes to prudential indicators.

Following a debate a recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For: (49)

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, S.P. Burrell, E.C. Carter, E.A. Clare, D.G. Davies, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, R.C. Evans, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, E.J. Greenaway, K.R. Guy, 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 (Deputy Leader), F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan (Deputy Speaker), C.F. Smith, M.J. Smith (Mayor) , A.J. Stanton, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

Against: (0)

It was

RESOLVED - that the increases in Authorised and Operational limits for 2014/15 to facilitate the Council to potentially undertake very significant capital regeneration investments of a commercial nature, and the other changes to prudential indicators, be approved.

b) Updates to the Constitution

Councillor C.F. Smith, Chairman of the Council Constitution Committee, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services which made recommendations to contract procedure rules and to the terms of reference of Health & Wellbeing Board.

Following a vote it was:

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the changes set out at Appendix 1 of the report relating to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (as amended by Council Constitution Committee) be approved with immediate effect;
- (b) that the changes set out at Appendix 2 of the report relating to the Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference (as amended by Council Constitution Committee) be approved with immediate effect.

10. MINUTES OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Council noted the resolved minutes of the following Boards and Committees:

Boundary Review Committee	3 February, 29 April and 23 June
Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee	19March
Planning Committee	30 April, 21 May and 11 June

11. QUESTIONS

The following Questions were asked in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7:

1 Councillor Nathan England asked Councillor Shaun Davies, Cabinet member for Neighbourhood Services, Employment and Skills

"What plans are there to improve Stafford Park, a major centre for employment and commerce in my ward of the Nedge?"

Councillor Davies replied that work was being undertaken to improve highways and footpaths in order to ensure a better connection between residential and business areas. A review was taking place of signage in the Borough's industrial areas, with older signage being replaced and removed where appropriate.

Councillor England asked if these plans had been backed by any other political group at Telford & Wrekin.

Councillor Davies replied that only the controlling group had supported this.

2 Councillor Kevin Guy asked Councillor Shaun Davies, Cabinet member for Neighbourhood Services, Employment and Skills

"Will the Cabinet member join with me in congratulating Madeley Town Council for investing in Job Junctions in my community?"

Councillor Davies replied that he would and that Madeley Town council and four other Parish councils had contributed £13k. This funding had been gratefully

received. Job Junctions had increased from 8 to the current level of 15. Attendance had increased from 365 to 876 in June and 23 people had been supported directly in to employment.

Councillor Guy asked about youth unemployment.

Councillor Davies replied that real efforts were being made to tackle the scourge of youth unemployment.

3 Councillor Stephen Bentley asked Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Economic Development

“Can you explain why development preference within rural areas is on greenfield, or agricultural land as opposed to brownfield sites?”

Councillor Smith replied that brownfield sites were prioritised but that this alone was not enough to meet local needs in urban and rural areas. Identified development was mainly on brownfield sites. The National Planning Policy Framework made it difficult to turn down planning applications on green field sites. However this was a problem facing all councils. He noted that the former Minister with responsibility for planning had recently congratulated the council on efforts to maximise brownfield development.

Councillor Bentley asked why the Shaping Places document did not refer to brownfield sites and why Greenfield land was being developed.

Councillor Smith replied that if the land was not owned by the council then there was nothing the council could do to prevent applications being brought forward. Rural parcels of land were being brought forward for development and the council did not have the powers to turn down these applications.

4 Councillor Stephen Bentley asked Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Regeneration & Economic Development

“Can you tell me how to contact the countryside agency?”

Councillor Smith noted that this organisation no longer existed as the Countryside Agency.

Councillor Bentley asked why some neighbourhood planning consultation documents were showing the Countryside Agency details.

Councillor Smith replied that he would check this and ensure details were updated.

5 Councillor Andrew Eade asked Councillor Kuldip Sahota

“Have you, as a matter of policy, put any contingency funds in place to meet the potential costs of any planning appeals?”

Councillor Sahota replied that there were not funds in place, each application was assessed regarding risks of appeal and funding allocated accordingly.

Councillor Eade asked if any money had been put aside to cover the £1.4m spent recently on the supermarket planning application in Newport and possible £600k for a further appeal.

Councillor Sahota replied that this would be managed as part of the council's overall £2.5m contingency.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

- a) Councillor P R Watling moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“This Council Notes with concern the recent DFE consultation on the power to delegate children’s social care functions and believes that, although the proposed regulations would enable local authorities to delegate responsibilities to small and medium sized social enterprises, there is a risk that it would lead to service provision shifting to large organisations with the potential for the pursuit of profit distorting decisions about children’s care. Therefore, this Council believes that these powers should remain with the democratically elected representatives of the people of Telford and Wrekin.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor G C W Reynolds.

Following a debate It was

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved.

Prior to debate of the next item Councillor F.R, Picken left the meeting.

- b) Councillor A J Eade moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“This Council calls on the Cabinet to consider reopening the consultation process for Shaping Places to ensure the fullest possible involvement by our community in the Borough and to facilitate those people who were not aware of the proposals in Shaping Places or discovered them too late to make a considered or detailed response.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor N A Dugmore.

Following the debate, a recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For: (19)*Councillors: Bentley, Blundell, Burrell, Carter, Dugmore, Eade, I Fletcher, V Fletcher, Green, Greenaway, Kiernan, Lawrence, Meredith, Mollett, Scammell, Seymour, Stanton, K Tomlinson and W Tomlinson*

Against: (29)*Councillors: Austin, Clare, D Davies, S Davies, A England, N England, Evans, Guy, Jhawar, Loveridge, Mackenzie, Mason, A McClements, W McClements, Minor, Murray, Overton, Pinter, G Reynolds, S Reynolds, Rhodes, Sahota, Sloan, C Smith, M Smith, Thompson, Turley, Watling and White*

Absent: (1) *Councillor Picken*

RESOLVED – that the motion be defeated.

The meeting ended at 8.58pm.

Mayor:

Date: