

## **BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 at 6.30 p.m. at The Haybridge Restaurant, Telford College of Arts & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, F. Bould, S.P. Burrell, E.C. Carter, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, C. Elliott, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, T. Hope, M. Hosken, M. Ion (Speaker), A.S. Jhawar, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. MacKenzie, A.D. 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, R.J. Sloan (Deputy Speaker), C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

In the absence of the Mayor the Deputy Mayor opened the meeting

#### **14. TRIBUTE TO COUNCILLOR DAVE DAVIES**

The Speaker requested that a minutes silence be held for the late Councillor Dave Davies following his recent passing. Councillor K.S. Sahota led the tributes to Councillor Davies. A number of councillors also went on to pay tribute to Councillor Davies who had been committed to, and had served the people of Telford & Wrekin well and who had borne his illness with dignity and great courage.

#### **15. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

#### **16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors R. Evans, I. Fletcher, J. Greenaway, J. Loveridge, C. Mason, W. McClements, J. Seymour and M. Smith

#### **17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors V Fletcher, J. Minor and D. White declared an interest on the Motion in regard to the NHS as members of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. Councillors Fletcher, Minor and White did not speak on this item or take part in the vote but remained in the room.

#### **18. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### **a) Leader's Report**

The Leader reported on the Southwater Development which had contributed to above average growth in the local economy. 800 new jobs had been created in the

Borough over the last few months. Superfast broadband would be available to 96% of houses in the Borough. The Leader welcomed news of proposed funding, which should be confirmed by Christmas, for a major link road connecting the M54, M6 and M6 Toll road. Work was continuing to tackle youth unemployment in the Borough. Jobsfair had been organised within Telford Town Centre to promote the seasonal jobs that were available. TCAT had recently opened its £3.5m automotive engineering academy whilst Harper Adams College had been short listed in the annual Times Higher Education Awards. The Pride in the Community team continued to work hard in the Borough whilst Community Pride funding applications were due to be assessed shortly.

Following the Leader's announcements Councillor C Elliott and Councillor L Murray left the meeting.

## **19. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor A Jhavar, Deputy Mayor, reported on a number of engagements that he had attended since the last meeting of the Council.

## **20. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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

### **1. The following question had been submitted by Mr G Kershaw to Councillor K.S. Sahota, the Leader of the Council:**

"What are the advantages and disadvantages to the people of the Borough if the Council achieves "City Status" for the Borough?"

The Leader replied that the Council had no intention of applying for City Status.

### **2. Mr R D Felton asked the following question of Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns**

"Why are we allowing the sale of farm land for housing when there is a shortage of agricultural land for growing crops? There are people wanting land for growing crops, as advertised in the newspapers"

Councillor Smith replied that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required the Council to take in to account different types of land in order to meet the housing needs and land supply and national growth. It was suggested that this question was referred to the Government who determined Policy.

## **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.

Councillor V Fletcher referring to item 2.1.11 of the Cabinet report, the dedication of bridleways and footpaths paid tribute to the Environmental Team and welcomed the report. She asked if it could be noted that there were problems regarding the cutting back of hedges and maintaining footpaths and asked what the Council's plans were for the subsequent maintenance of these bridleways and footpaths. Councillor E Clare, Cabinet Member for Leisure Services & Culture responded that there would be difficult choices to be made due to funding, but where requests for repairs were received, efforts to accommodate these would be made.

Councillor E Carter referring to item 2.1.5 of the Cabinet report, the Telford and Wrekin Superfast Broadband Programme welcomed the report and suggested that the Council work jointly with Shropshire to ensure that the rural areas were not overlooked.

Councillor A Eade referring to item 2.1.8 of the Cabinet report, AFC Telford – Amendments to Legal Agreements, asked Councillor S Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, if the original leases with AFC Telford had been faulty and asked for a full explanation regarding the defects and who was responsible?

Councillor Davies noted that the leases had been finalised under the previous Council administration. During the previous few days New College, Telford and Wrekin Council and AFC Telford had agreed a new Lease which would take effect from the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

## **22. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET**

### **a) Property and Housing Investment Programme**

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment and skills presented the report on the Property & Housing Investment Programme.

This programme would deliver 425 new homes and raise the bar of acceptable rental properties. This would enable the Council to utilise brown field and stalled sites to stimulate economic growth and regeneration and create a number of jobs and apprenticeships during the construction and operational phases of the programme. Although the proposals were to address the housing need within the Borough and to create regeneration, any revenue income received from the proposals would be invested into the protection of essential front line services. As the asset would appreciate over the project life, this would lead to a significant capital receipt should the asset be disposed of and by Year 5 it was expected to have added a value of £68m to the asset portfolio.

Some of the properties would be commercially rented. The Council were borrowing an estimated £32m but the properties would not be solely rented to the social housing sector.

Councillor N Dugmore asked Councillor Davies to confirm that the Apartments in Southwater would be private rental and enquired as to where the associated car parking would be situated. Councillor Dugmore also asked if the Council Tax

income would remain the same for the next 30 years. Councillor S Davies replied that the apartments would be at market rent and that car parking would be addressed and included in a future report to council. The model used in the report had not made an assumption that Council Tax would increase.

Councillor A Mackenzie commented that the Council would lead the way and become a quality landlord in a quality market. Councillor Davies added that the Council would become part of the Quality Accreditation Scheme for Private Landlords.

Councillor A Eade raised concerns regarding the project and the £7m capital assets, noting that this was something that the private sector could be undertaking.

Councillor S Bentley asked about the social housing element and if the properties would be offered as right to buy. He also enquired why the model had changed. Councillor Davies replied that market rent and social housing would be offered but the right to buy scheme did not apply.

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

**For:( 29)**

Councillors K. Austin, K.T. Blundell, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, 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, D.R.W. White

**Against: (13)**

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

**Absent: (2)**

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott and L.A. Murray.

It was

**RESOLVED that –**

- (a) the investment of Council held land valued at £6.776m to facilitate the housing and commercial developments set out in the report, which includes part disposal of the Madeley Court site (as shown in the appendix to the report) be approved;**

- (b) **prudential borrowing of up to £52m to fund the investment in housing and commercial developments, as set out in the report, be approved;**
- (c) **the necessary changes to the capital programme and revenue budget to account for the housing and commercial developments as detailed within the report be approved**

b) Financial Monitoring 2014/15

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Employment and Skills presented the report on the 2014/15 Financial Monitoring which provided an update on the progress relating to the capital programme.

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

**For:( 29)**

Councillors K. Austin, K.T. Blundell, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, 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, D.R.W. White.

**Against: (13)**

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

**Absent: (2)**

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott and L.A. Murray

It was

**RESOLVED– that the new allocations and slippage detailed in the report, along with the funding changes to the capital programme, be approved**

c) Youth Justice Plan 2014/15

Councillor P. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families presented a report on the Youth Justice Plan. The Plan set out how youth justice services across West Mercia were structured and funded. Key actions, service delivery risks and improvements were also identified within the plan.

**RESOLVED – that the Youth Justice Plan 2014/15 be approved.**

d) Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Update

Councillor Kuldip Sahota, Leader of the Council gave an update on the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

On 7<sup>th</sup> July the Government had announced that the LEP had secured £75.3m from the Government's Single Local Growth Fund to support a series of infrastructure investment projects which would accelerate delivery of new jobs and homes. This figure included £10.4m in 2015/16 and £12.3m for 2016/17 of confirmed funding and a provisional award of £41.9m for projects starting in 2016 and beyond. This was in addition to the £10.7m that the Government had previously committed as part of the Local Growth Deal funding for the area.

It was anticipated that Telford and Wrekin would receive £18.8m investment over the next two years together with £5.6m of public/private sector matched investment. This included £13.9m confirmed funding for the Telford Growth Package which would accelerate delivery of employment land at Hortonwood and open up a number of housing sites.

Included on the provisional list of funding award was £3.6m for the Telford Eastern Gateway which would support the delivery of the flagship T54 employment site and £1.3m to relocate the bus station in Telford Town Centre.

The Government had made a commitment to explore the potential for sharing land receipts from the sale of agreed HCA assets in Telford.

Part of agreeing the Growth Deal involved the Government asking the LEP to put in place robust and collaborative governance arrangements to ensure democratic accountability for expenditure and delivery of the agreed programme. It was proposed that a Joint Committee be set up which included the Leaders of 3 Local authorities forming the Marches LEP to exercise the necessary executive functions.

Councillor N Dugmore asked with regard to the £1.3m to relocate the bus station had this decision already been taken and what would happen to the £1.3m if not used for this purpose? Councillor Sahota replied that the funding was from the LEP and this matter was open to consultation.

Councillor Sahota replied to Councillor Dugmore that with regard to the £1.3 from the LEP that there were no plans yet whilst the consultation was still ongoing.

Councillor E Carter commented that he hoped the LEP was successful. It was currently very difficult for people with physical disabilities to get to the bus station and asked if there was anything that could be done in the interim period?

Councillor Sahota replied to Councillor Carter that the design of the bus station would be undertaken with the plans but these had not been finalised.

Following a debate it was

**RESOLVED** – that the Growth Deal Funding from the Marches LEP be approved, and that it be applied to deliver the projects for which the funding has been allocated.

### **23. ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT AND AWARDS**

Councillor D White presented the Annual Scrutiny Report.

Telford and Wrekin's Scrutiny function had been recognised nationally and had been shortlisted under 2 areas.

Scrutiny Chairman, Councillor D White announced the winners of the Good Scrutiny Award for 2013/14. This was to be shared by both Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors K Guy and S Reynolds collected the award on behalf of the Committees

### **24. MINUTES OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES**

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

Audit Committee	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Licensing Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Personnel Committee	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Planning Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> July, 23 <sup>rd</sup> July and 13 August 2014
Scrutiny Management Board	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Standards Committee	8 <sup>th</sup> July 2014

### **25. QUESTIONS**

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

#### **1 Councillor S Burrell asked Councillor P Watling**

"Noting the tragic case of abuse in Rotherham, could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services provide this Council and the Community with reassurance that no similar circumstances exist in the Borough?"

Councillor Watling provided reassurance that the Borough were doing everything possible to combat such activities and threats.

## **2 Councillor S Burrell asked Councillor P Watling**

“Could the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services provide us with the number of Primary School places required in the Borough to satisfy demand caused by speculative developments and targets set by Shaping Places and explain how he will fund them?”

Councillor Watling explained this was subject to a consultation document and that it was not yet known which sites would be developed.

In response, Councillor Burrell asked how Councillor Watling proposed to create the additional 3200 secondary school places required to support increased development in the Borough in order to avert a looming crisis in secondary education provision. Councillor Watling believed this was scaremongering and that there were enough school places.

Councillor R Picken left the meeting before the next question was raised.

## **3 Councillor G Reynolds asked Councillor S Davies**

“Can the cabinet member for Employment and skills update the council on efforts to reduce youth unemployment in our borough?”

Councillor Davies provided an update on the work being done to reduce Youth Unemployment.

Councillor Reynolds asked if match funding was available to the Council to tackle unemployment?

Councillor Davies explained that he had written to the Minister numerous times but had not received a response. A motion would be brought to Council to write to the Government to match fund £1.4m.

## **4 Councillor A Eade asked Councillor C Smith**

“Can you confirm, that unlike the previous Labour Administration, this Council has no plans to build on the Town Park’s Arena?”

Councillor Smith replied that there were no plans to building on the Town Park.

Councillor A Eade believed this to be incorrect but Councillor C Smith reassured Members that there would be no building on the Town Park.

Prior to debate of the next item Councillor G Green left the meeting.

## **26. NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

“This Council notes with great concern proposals that would see one Accident and Emergency Centre for Telford, Shropshire and Mid-Wales becoming “ambulance only” with so called walk-in patients diverted to an Urgent Care Centre (UCC).

Telford & Wrekin Council again calls for a full 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Service at our Princess Royal Hospital and urges the Secretary of State to intervene in this process that is bringing so much uncertainty to our residents”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor R J Sloan.

Following a debate it was

**RESOLVED – that the motion be unanimously agreed.**

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

“This Council notes the success of Shropshire Council in identifying 5.47 years of future Housing land supply which will help them resist speculative development that is currently blighting the Borough of Telford & Wrekin.

This Council also notes with concern that, despite 3 years in control, the current Labour Administration have failed to identify a similar land supply and calls on the Council Leader to explain to the community the reasons for this abject failure to protect the Borough from out of control building development”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor A Eade

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

**For: (13)**

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

**Against: (24)**

Councillors K. Austin, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, J. Pinter, G.C.W Reynolds, S. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling, D.R.W. White

**Abstentions: (3)**

K.T. Blundell, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson

**Absent: (4)**

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott, G.M. Green, L.A. Murray, F.R. Picken,

It was

**RESOLVED** – that the motion be defeated.

The meeting ended at 8.52pm.

**Mayor:** .....

**Date:** .....