

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday 9 July 2015 at 6.30pm at Shropshire College Hotel Ltd 'The Telford Whitehouse', Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

PRESENT:

Councillors J.C. Ashford, S.L. Barnes, S. Bentley, M. Boylan, A.J. Burford, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, L.D. Carter, E.A. Clare, G.K. Cook, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, R.C. Evans, V.A. Fletcher, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, J.A. Francis, C.A. Furnival, E.J. Greenaway, K.R. Guy, M.B. Hosken, J. Jones, A. Lawrence, J. Loveridge, N.C. Lowery, C.N. Mason, A.D. McClements, A.A. Meredith, J.C. Minor, C.P.R. Mollett, L.A. Murray (Mayor), T.J. Nelson, R.A. Overton, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, S.J. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), P.J. Scott, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith (Speaker), M.J. Smith, B.D. Tillotson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.G. Wright.

19. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting and the Special Meeting for admission of an honorary Freeman of the Borough, held on 21st May 2015, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

20. TRIBUTE TO JEZ PRESCOTT

Council observed one minutes silence in tribute to Jez Prescott, a community worker in the Youth Innovation team who had tragically lost his life on the Brecon Beacons. The Leader paid tribute to Jez's outstanding dedication and commitment to the young people of the Borough. The thoughts of everyone at the Council were with his family, friends and colleagues at a very sad and difficult time.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor K.T. Blundell.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Managing Director and the Monitoring Officer declared an interest in agenda item 9, Implementation of new legislation and changes to constitution – statutory officers report. The Speaker confirmed that both officers would leave the room during debate and voting on that item.

23. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader reported on the successful T Party and on the Carnival of Giants parade. He asked members to note the building of rental homes which would be available from early next year. Consultation would begin in August on the draft local plan, reducing the number of new homes to be built from over 26000 to 15500. The new £1m refurbishment of Brookside Community Centre had been completed in June and the Town Centre Box road had also now been completed. Jobs for the Borough remained a focus.

24. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported on a number of engagements that he had attended since the last meeting of the Council.

25. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The following question from the public had been received.

With the biggest changes to Bus services in Telford & Wrekin in the last 10 years, I'm concerned about the lack of consultation by Arriva & the impact these changes will have on the most vulnerable. I'm pleased to see the council has raised these concerns. Could the Cabinet Member update me?

John Thompson
Chair Telford Wrekin Bus User Group
25 Broadway Avenue
Trench

Councillor A D McClements, Cabinet Member: Communities, Regeneration & Transport, told the meeting that the Council had no direct influence on bus routes. Arriva were not legally required to consult on proposals. The Council had written to the Secretary of State on this matter and also lobbied the Traffic Commissioner. The Leader of the Council had also written to Arriva insisting that they carry out full and proper consultation.

26. 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.

Upon the following question being raised, Councillor L. D. Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance & Service Delivery, left the room.

AFC Telford Utd Development Report – In response to a question from Councillor AJ Eade, Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Business, Neighbourhood & Customer

Service, told the meeting that this decision had not been called in that the Cabinet approval stood. In response to a further question from Councillor A. Lawrence, Councillor Davies replied that there was no conflict of interest and that the same standards were applied to all councillors. Councillor Carter returned to the room.

Planning of School Places – In response to a question from Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher, Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, replied that the Holy Trinity School in Priorslee currently remained as a Church school. He agreed to provide a written response on the transfer of assets.

27. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET

i) 2014/15 Out-turn and Initial Monitoring for 2015/16

Councillor L.J. Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance. Councillor Carter, in reply to a question from Councillor A.J. Eade on Council debt told the meeting that in the face of huge funding cuts the Council was now collecting a further £19m of revenue when compared to 2011 revenue. The Council would continue to work relentlessly on collection of outstanding debt.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the Revenue out-turn position and related virements for 2014/15, shown in Appendix 3 of the report (and subject to audit by the Council's external auditors), and the transfers to reserves detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report be approved;
- (ii) that the Capital out-turn position and related supplementary estimates, virements and re-phasing, shown in Appendix 4 of the report, be approved;
- (iii) that performance against income targets be noted;
- (iv) that the key issues identified for 2015/16 be noted, and the new capital allocation detailed in paragraph 8.2 be approved.

Prior to discussion of the following item the Managing Director and the Monitoring Officer left the room.

28. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW LEGISLATION AND CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION – STATUTORY OFFICERS

Councillor Kuldip Sahota, Leader of the Council: presented the report of the People Services Manager which set out proposals for changes to the disciplinary process for the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer. The report also included minor adjustments to the Constitution arising from the meeting of Audit Committee on 30 June.

RESOLVED –

(i) That the Council’s Constitution be amended to incorporate the new legislative requirements and that Council consider approving the proposed arrangement as detailed in Appendix 1 for the disciplining and dismissal of senior staff as set out in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/881), (“the Regulations”)

(ii) That the current Independent Persons engaged by the Council for member conduct issues be invited to fulfil the role of Independent Persons under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/881), (“the Regulations”).

(iii) The Council confirm agreement for the arrangements in Appendix1 to contain a panel made up of Independent Persons and that accordingly the requirement for political balance does not apply in accordance with the provisions in section 17 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(iv) That further reports be submitted to Council as national contractual and legislative issues are determined.

(v) That the Constitutional Changes recommended by Audit Committee at its meeting of 30 June 2015 be approved.

Prior to the following agenda item the Managing Director and the Monitoring Officer returned to the room.

29. RECOMMENDATION FROM BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Audit Committee 30 June 2015

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

RESOLVED – That the updated policy be adopted

30. MINUTES OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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

Co-Operative and Communities Scrutiny Committee	29 th January
Health & Wellbeing Board	21st January and 11 March
Licensing Committee	24th March
Planning Committee	25 th February, 18 th March, 8 th April and 3 rd June

31. QUESTIONS

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

1. Councillor Peter Scott asked Councillor Shaun Davies the following question:

Newport residents continue to be concerned about their recycling offer following the closure of the Newport Recycling Centre. Following my discussions with the Leader at the end of last year, the Council offered up a free bulk recycling collection to all Newport area residents. Can the Cabinet Member: Business, Neighbourhood & Customer Services confirm any improvements to that offer to help the people of Newport recycle other items such as large garden waste?

Councillor Davies replied that the free bulk collection scheme had been extended to September 2016, and for over 65's and people with disabilities this was Borough wide. 600 bulk collections had been undertaken already. Councillors and the local press would be promoting this initiative.

2. Councillor Peter Scott asked Councillor Richard Overton the following question:

Now that the council has secured a 5 year land supply, can the Cabinet Member: Housing, Public Health & Protection confirm that the remaining greenfield land in and around Newport will be preserved for the future benefit of the area and it's residents, and are there any plans to include much needed outdoor sports facilities?

Councillor R.A. Overton, Cabinet Member: Housing, Public Health & Protection, replied that the Local Plan would contain a 'Green guarantee' to protect green spaces within the Borough. Section 106 contributions from approved planning applications in Newport would be used to provide new sports pitches and outdoor provision.

3 Councillor Chris Turley asked Councillor Paul Watling the following question:

Can the Cabinet Member update the Council on the current situation with the four TCMAT (Telford Co-operative Multi Academy Trust) schools?

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, replied that GCSE results had been disappointing. There had been no Council representative on TCMAT board since 2014. In February 2015 the four schools had been placed in special measures with the trust now being wound down and a restructure of lead officers and staff taking place. He was confident that with the schools working in partnership with the Council that they would achieve success in the future.

4. Councillor Stephen Bentley asked Councillor Paul Watling the following question:

Would the cabinet member, explain the decision to change the names of the failing schools that the administration introduced under the co-operative banner?

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, replied that the Council had no involvement with the decision to change names; this was a matter for the governing body. He urged all councillors to support each school.

5. Councillor Stephen Bentley will ask Councillor Kuldip Sahota the following question

Will the leader explain to me how this business winning council works?

Councillor Bentley withdrew this question.

6. Councillor Stephen Bentley asked Councillor Kuldip Sahota the following question

Can the leader provide members an update with regards negotiations between the Local Authority and NHS trust with regards to the retention of Accident & Emergency provision at the Princess Royal Hospital?

Councillor Sahota replied that he had written to the Secretary of State for Health on five separate occasions since September 2013. There was no ambiguity to the position of the Council; Accident & Emergency services must be retained for Telford.

7 Councillor Nathan England asked the following question of Councillor Paul Watling

Can the Cabinet Member for Children Young People & Families comment on the current situation at TCAT where up to 80 posts are being made redundant?

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, was dismayed at the cuts, he believed that people should come together to lobby for a better deal.

32. NOTICES OF MOTION

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

This Council notes with concern the proposed changes to bus routes announced by Arriva and condemns their lack of proper consultation and consideration of community needs in Telford and Wrekin. This council therefore resolves to press Arriva for an extension to the current 19th of July deadline in order for the Company to gather views, allow proper consideration and reflection on the impact which their current actions will inflict on our community.

This Council further resolves to act on behalf of the Community and challenge Arriva's decision if proper consultation and consideration does not take place

The motion was seconded by Councillor S Bentley

The following amended motion had been submitted

This Council notes with concern the proposed changes to bus routes announced by Arriva and condemns their lack of proper consultation and consideration of community needs in Telford and Wrekin. This council therefore resolves to press Arriva for an extension to the current 19th of July deadline in order for the Company to gather views, allow proper consideration and reflection on the impact which their current actions will inflict on our community.

Although this Council has acted on behalf of the community and challenged Arriva's decision, this Council deplores the fact that communities have little influence over the local transport on which many depend and the current law makes it impossible to prevent the loss of a much valued bus service.

This Council calls on both of the Telford and Wrekin MP's to lobby their government to make changes to the 1985 Transport Services Act and give communities greater power over local transport in their area.

Following a debate on the amendment a vote was taken and the amendment was carried. A debate ensued on the amended motion.

A recorded was requested and voting was as follows:

For (30)

Councillors Burford, L Carter, Clare, Cook, Davies, A England, N England, R Evans, Guy, Jones, Loveridge, Mason, McClements, Minor, Murray, Pinter, G Reynolds, SA Reynolds, SW Reynolds, Sahota, Scott, Sloan, C Smith, M Smith, K Tomlinson, W Tomlinson, Turley, Watling

Against (23)

Councillors Ashford, Barnes, Bentley, Boylan, Burrell, E Carter, Dugmore, Eade, I Fletcher, V Fletcher, Francis, Furnival, Greenaway, Hosken, Kiernan, Lawrence, Lowery, Meredith, Mollett, Nelson, Seymour, Tillotson, Wright.

The motion, as amended was approved
It was

RESOLVED – that the amended motion be approved

(ii) Councillor E.J. Carter moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

This council notes with regret the previous Administration's decision to close the well-used recycling centre at Newport, while at the same time granting planning permission for over a thousand new houses in the town. Consequently, this Council requests that the Administration works with the community to provide a new facility in this part of the Borough.

The motion was seconded by Councillor T.J. Nelson

Following a debate a recorded vote was requested. Voting was as follows

For (26)

Councillors Ashford, Barnes, Bentley, Boylan, Burrell, E Carter, Dugmore, Eade, I Fletcher, V Fletcher, Francis, Furnival, Greenaway, Hosken, Kiernan, Lawrence, Lowery, Meredith, Mollett, Nelson, Scott, Seymour, Tillotson, K Tomlinson, W Tomlinson, Wright,

Against (27)

Councillors Burford, L Carter, Clare, Cook, Davies, A England, N England, R Evans, Guy, Jones, Loveridge, Mason, McClements, Minor, Murray, Pinter, G Reynolds, SA Reynolds, SW Reynolds, Sahota, Sloan, C Smith, M Smith, Turley, Watling

It was

RESOLVED – that the motion not be approved

(iii) Councillor A.D. McClements moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“With a number of Conservative MPs now speaking out against their own Government’s ill thought-out Bedroom Tax, (including the Shropshire MP, Daniel Kawczynski) we call on our two MPs for both The Wrekin and Telford to support this Council’s opposition to the Bedroom Tax and call on the Government to scrap this flawed policy with immediate effect, which is having a detrimental and devastating effect on the lives of so many vulnerable people in our Borough who are renting from a registered housing association or other registered social landlord.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor S.A.W. Reynolds

Following a debate a recorded vote was requested. Voting was as follows

For (30)

Councillors Burford, L Carter, Clare, Cook, Davies, A England, N England, R Evans, Guy, Jones, Loveridge, Mason, McClements, Minor, Murray, Pinter, G Reynolds, SA Reynolds, SW Reynolds, Sahota, Scott, Sloan, C Smith, M Smith, K Tomlinson, W Tomlinson, Turley, Watling

Abstention (23)

Councillors Ashford, Barnes, Bentley, Boylan, Burrell, E Carter, Dugmore, Eade, I Fletcher, V Fletcher, Francis, Furnival, Greenaway, Hosken, Kiernan, Lawrence, Lowery, Meredith, Mollett, Nelson, Seymour, Tillotson, Wright.

It was

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

Mayor:

Date: