

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 20 July 2017 at 6.00pm at The Place, Oakengates, Telford

Present:

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

20. One Minute's Silence

The Mayor invited Members to observe a minute's silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives and those affected by tragic events at the London Bridge and Borough Market terrorist attacks on 3 June 2017, the Finsbury Park Mosque terrorist attack on 19 June 2017 and the London Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017, and also in memory of former Councillor Sylvia Pritchard who had recently passed away.

21. Prayers

The Reverend Keith Osmund-Smith said prayers.

22. Apologies for Absence

Councillors V A Fletcher, M B Hosken, J Jones, A A Meredith and G C W Reynolds.

Councillors S L Barnes and G K Cook were also absent from the meeting.

23. Declarations of Interest

Councillors A J Burford and R J Sloan declared an interest in minute number 33(b), Notices of Motion, due to their membership of the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and indicated that they would not take part in the debate.

24. Minutes of the Council

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Annual Council and Special meetings held on 25 May 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

25. Leader's Report & Announcements

Councillor S Davies, Leader of the Council, welcomed all guests and councillors to the meeting. He referred to recent terrorist related incidents in London and Manchester, expressing his condolences to families and victims. Councillor Davies

noted the re-election of Lucy Allan MP and Mark Pritchard MP at the recent General Election and expressed his desire to work more closely with both MPs to be benefit of the borough.

Cllr Davies went on to note that 10K people had attended the recent Carnival of Giants which had also seen the launch of the Telford @ 50 campaign. He welcomed pledges of support for the campaign from Telford Shopping Centre and Denso and advised that local residents would be asked for their views on ways to provide a lasting and tangible legacy of the anniversary.

The Leader updated the meeting on the three main priorities he had identified 12 months ago, in particular noting the PRH4Me campaign and continued concerns about the provision of Accident and Emergency Services in Telford, the generation of income and securing of grant funding through the creation and safeguarding of jobs through the Growth Fund and Land Deal, the success of NuPlace, and the completion of the Building Schools for the Future Programme which had seen the building of eight new schools and the refurbishment or remodelling of a further six.

Councillor A J Eade, Leader of the Conservative group, also paid tribute to victims of recent terrorist attacks and congratulated Lucy Allan MP and Mark Pritchard MP on their re-election. He commented on building working relationships, funding for the Telford @ 50 campaign, the operation of the PRH4Me campaign, campaigning for Fair Funding, Telford Land Deal, and planning for school places.

Councillor W L Tomlinson also expressed condolences to the victims of recent terrorist attacks and his hope that the perpetrators would be brought justice. He commented upon maintaining the safety of the most vulnerable in society, and referenced continued national financial struggles regarding adult social care and children and young people. He welcomed investment in the borough, concern regarding the future of the Princess Royal Hospital and urged the Council to set aside differences work together towards the common good.

In response, the Leader, welcomed commitments from both Leaders to work together. He acknowledged cross-party working, the different approaches of the different parties and he appealed for voting on local initiatives and strategies which would benefit the borough to reflect the physical presence at subsequent events.

26. Mayor's Announcements and Time to Change Pledge

The Mayor commented upon the engagements he had attended since the Annual General Meeting, particularly highlight a memorable visit to the Telford Fire Station Open Day when he had taken the place of a crash test dummy for a demonstration. He advised that he was working closely with his chosen charity for the year, Severn Hospice, and welcomed donations.

Time to Change Pledge

The Mayor also reported that he had overseen the signing of the 'Time to Change Pledge' that afternoon and, with the leave of the Speaker, he welcomed Cllr Rae Evans, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Tourism and Partnerships, to address the meeting. Cllr Evans explained that this was a national campaign which

aimed to raise awareness of mental health. She added that one of the current administration's manifesto commitments was to sign the employer pledge and well-being was key to the Council's workforce strategy around 'healthy organisation'.

27. Public Questions

The following questions from the public had been received.

- (i) The following question to Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development was submitted by Mr D Lovegrove:

"It is easy to spend someone else's money. If landlords and their tenants are disproportionately responsible for ASB etc, and the Council can prove that fact, would the Authority compulsory purchase properties at market value and manage them more successfully, without increasing rent as introducing retrospective legislation is unjust?"

Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development responded that he believed the rationale for raising this question was a result of the Council's recent launch of the selective licensing consultation which was due to end on 21 August.

Whilst Cabinet acknowledged that many private sector landlords provided decent well managed and well maintained accommodation, which did not cause any problems for the local community, there were properties that were poorly managed and maintained, suffered from overcrowding and on occasions were unsafe. Despite the council using our enforcement powers and providing guidance to local private sector landlords there were areas in the borough where these problems still existed.

Cabinet believed that Selective Licensing might be a tool that would help to address these challenges, and cross-party support from Scrutiny had been obtained prior to making a decision to consult. The consultation would take account of all comments received.

In relation to the question about compulsory purchase powers, these were provided to enable acquiring authorities to compulsorily purchase land to carry out a function which Parliament had decided was in the public interest. Compulsory purchase was a power that was intended to be used as a last resort and a compelling case that it was in the public interest was required. It would therefore not be appropriate to use compulsory purchase powers when there were other appropriate powers available to the Council to deal with the specific issues such as the introduction of a selective licensing scheme, Interim Management Orders and rent repayment orders. Additionally, anyone who had land acquired under a compulsory purchase order was generally entitled to compensation and the costs associated with the process, which may require a public inquiry, were extremely high.

In conclusion, Councillor Carter offered assurances that the Council would listen to comments received through the consultation and work with all parties to reach a good outcome for all, and would take time to do so.

- (ii) The following question to Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development was submitted by Mrs T Wood:

“Regarding the council owned solar farm, online documents indicate that the original debt of around 4 million remains outstanding at the end of the project term. Can you confirm when, how and over what period of time this debt will be repaid and direct me to where this is evidenced?”

Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development responded that the Council was a large and complex organisation delivering many different services. As well as a substantial revenue budget the Council also had a significant capital programme each year – for the current year this was in excess of £100m.

The Council got best value by managing its investment and borrowing decisions (or treasury management decisions) on a global basis rather than taking a piecemeal approach.

The Council did not, therefore, take out separate loans for each of its many different capital projects which quite often each spanned several years. Clearly by combining treasury management arrangements better value for taxpayers could be obtained as larger deals were placed in the money markets and admin costs were reduced.

The Council had to comply with all local government accounting requirements and each year an extensive external audit checked for full compliance. Councillor Carter reassured Members that a “clean” audit opinion was consistently achieved for sound financial management arrangements.

There was not, therefore, a separate loan for the solar farm. Detailed accounting records for capital projects was maintained and there was a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy which was set by full Council each year as part of the budget setting process in March. The MRP policy determined how quickly the principal on capital projects was written down.

Whilst Councillor Carter was unclear which “online documents” Mrs Wood referred to he considered there may be confusion around a table which appeared on page 188 of the Council’s service and financial planning strategy report considered by Council on 2 March 2017. The table showed the total cumulative spend incurred on various commercial schemes. The figure shown against the solar farm in the table remained constant because the project had been completed and no further spend was being incurred. The table showed the total cost of the solar farm and other projects and in no way referred to the amount of loan outstanding.

The borrowing incurred to fund the Solar Farm would be repaid over a 25 year period on an annuity basis in accordance with the Council's MRP policy which was available on pages 203 and 204 of the service and financial planning strategy report referred to above.

On this basis, as at 31 March 2017, £3.607m remained outstanding which would reduce to £3.508m as at 31 March 2018, and would be fully repaid by the end of the 2039/40 financial year.

The solar farm would make a revenue surplus of over £200,000 in the current year net of all costs and represented a sound investment for local people as the surplus was used to reduce the impact of the cuts being made to the Council's Government grant.

- (iii) The following question to Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development was submitted by Ms S Whitfield:

“Given that the only housing the Council owns is almost exclusively for commercial rent and Social Registered Landlords are selling their out of date stock, why is the Council seeking to discriminate against private landlords on whom you so very heavily rely to manage homelessness in the Borough?”

A petition in support of the question was presented to The Mayor.

Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development responded that he believed this question also had origins in the launch of the selective licensing scheme consultation. He re-iterated that the Council was not seeking to discriminate against private landlords and acknowledged that they housed many of homeless clients.

The Council was committed to working closely with private sector landlords and Councillor Carter was aware that a number of meetings had been held between senior officers within the Council and the Wrekin Landlords Association since the consultation had launched and that dialogue continued.

He believed the New Homeless Reduction Act would bring in other elements to help clients facing homelessness and help address current issues faced by landlords where historically tenants were not classed as homeless until they had a court eviction date. The new legislation would enable us to work with clients sooner to help remove the burden on landlords having to always go through court. National legislation had recognised, as did this Council, that landlords had an important part to play in the housing market.

28. 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.

Selective Licensing

Councillor Bentley asked for clarification as to why the introduction of the Landlord's levy was limited to selected areas and why it did not include all private landlords?

Councillor L D Carter responded that the consultation had been embarked upon following cross-party support from Scrutiny. The reasons why identified areas were selected was subject to evidence based criteria as set out in the consultation document.

Councillor J M Seymour noted that at paragraph 1.6 of the Cabinet report on Selective Licensing reference was made to the support of Customer Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee, which was also referenced in the Annual Scrutiny. Councillor Seymour believed the meeting had been an informal verbal briefing with no record of comments made and asked for the reference to be removed and for Scrutiny to be allowed to carry out an in-depth review in light of information brought forward from other parties.

Councillor L D Carter responded that the meeting was minuted and when the report was made to Cabinet, the Conservative Group Leader had made no contrary comments. It would be up to Scrutiny to decide whether to scrutinise the proposal further once the consultation was complete. He reiterated that this was a genuine consultation seeking views from all parties.

Councillor A J Eade asked for an update on the potential effect Selective Licensing would have on homelessness in the borough and what forecasts had been prepared to ascertain the scale of any problem?

Councillor L D Carter responded that all aspects of Selective Licensing and its impacts had been taken into consideration as well as all information provided through the consultation. He repeated that this was a genuine consultation and he wanted many people, including Members, to engage with it. Fundamentally, he believed all parties agreed that there should not be negative impacts from the proposals, but equally something needed to be done to improve accommodation in the Private Rented Sector.

Councillor N C Lowery sought clarification of the extent to which the Council had used existing powers in terms of imposing civil penalties and what evidence had been acquired to attribute poorly managed properties in the private rented sector to warrant the introduction of Selective Licensing.

Councillor L D Carter referred to previous responses.

Councillor A J Eade sought clarification that the Council had existing powers which could be used in place of introducing this scheme – as he believed they had not be used for five years and the scheme was being introduced to finance enforcement?

Councillor L D Carter stated that it was incorrect to claim that the Council had not used its enforcement powers for five years. The notion that this was a money making scheme was also incorrect. The proposals were based on an ambition to drive up standards in the poorest parts of the private rented sector as poor housing

was one of the reasons that people accessed the most expensive Council services. Again, he urged Members to engage in the consultation.

Councillor W L Tomlinson asked what provisions were in place for the views of the tenants to be taken into account in order to ensure a balanced response to the consultation?

Councillor L D Carter referred to the wide ranging consultation, with events taking place in the communities affected if the proposals were implemented. The views of residents was as important as that of landlords, particularly those who had experienced problems. The proposals did not seek to pit parties against each other but sought to address the issues of 'bad' landlords and in some ways 'bad' tenants.

Telford Land Deal

Councillor E J Carter stated in the past when he had touched on the work done by the Conservative administration towards this project, it had been met with derision. However, he had an agenda from a meeting which took place on 2 August 2010 and at that point there was an item on Central Telford Area Action Plan which quoted himself remarking that he had recently met with Paul Spooner of the HCA who had indicated a willingness to transfer all HCA land to the Council. Was that understood and accepted by the administration?

Councillor S Davies welcomed Councillor Carter's contribution in 2010. However, the land deal had only been in place for a year and it was also noted that the Council's investment in the deal had been voted against by the Conservative group.

Procurement Update

Councillor N A Dugmore referred to page 46 of the report and asked for justification for why was £280K was taken from the Health and Wellbeing budget to pay for Telford's 50th anniversary celebration events.

Councillor L D Carter said that this was fundamentally untrue. He referenced significant cuts from central government upon the public health budget.

Investing in Telford at 50

Councillor R Mehta asked for confirmation as to whether Horsehay Railway Trust could express an interest in the Telford @ 50 fund and also whether this was the correct year for 50th birthday celebrations?

Councillor S Davies stated that Horsehay Railway Trust could make an expression of interest and details of how to do this would be publicised in the following week. Councillor Davies confirmed that he had double checked the year was correct by referencing Council magazine archives from the 40th birthday year.

Developing an Online Local Authority Lottery

Councillor I T W Fletcher asked whether levels of deprivation would be increased by encouraging gambling?

Councillor L D Carter stated that the principles and aims of the lottery were clearly set out in the report; the aim was to support smaller organisations who did a lot in the community and would most likely have to do more as cuts took effect. Section 11 of the report set out an impact assessment in the terms of the potential for increasing gambling and this seemed to indicate that the answer was no.

Finalisation and Closure of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme

Councillor N A M England, who was governor of Grange Park Primary School, thanked Officers, particularly Jim Collins, for creating the BSF programme in Telford which had led to the building of Grange Park Primary School. He asked for an explanation of the benefits to Nedge Ward following the project.

Councillor P R Watling stated that he was very proud of the BSF programme. He referenced a meeting he had at Grange Park following his appointment as Lead Member for Children & Young People with parents angry that their children were being schooled in demountable classrooms. 400 Children were now being educated in new buildings as a result of the administrations changes to the BSF programme. He was proud that there was an excess of secondary school places in the borough due to the BSF programme. Prior to the current administration's intervention, two of the schools would have been under threat of closure but instead a school had been built in Priorslee and Charlton School rebuilt in Wellington. .

Young High Street Challenge

Councillor S Bentley referred to a serious incident which had occurred outside Crudgington Primary School. He asked if the Leader would commit £100K from the Pride Fund for safety measures outside Crudgington Primary School rather than Councillor Bentley having to make a bid for funding.

Councillor S Davies stated he would ensure that the issue was investigated by appropriate Officers with the relevant Cabinet Member.

29. Recommendations from Cabinet

Cabinet – 29 June 2017

(i) Service & Financial Planning Report – 2016/17 Outturn and 2017/18 Update

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance & HR.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the Revenue outturn position for 2016/17 and related virements in Appendix 3 of the report, which is subject to audit by the Council's external auditors, be approved;**
- (b) the transfers to reserves and associated approval to spend the reserves as detailed in the report at section 5 and Appendix 2 be approved;**

- (c) the supplementary revenue estimate in relation to the additional Adult Social Care Grant announced after the Council's budget was set detailed in paragraph 9.1 of the report be approved;
- (d) the Capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates, re-phasing and virements shown in Appendix 4 to the report and as summarised in the report be approved;
- (e) the performance against income targets be noted; and
- (f) the key issues identified for 2017/18 be noted;

30. Annual Scrutiny Report

Councillor N A M England, Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board, presented the Annual Scrutiny Report for noting.

He thanked Councillor S A W Reynolds, who had been lead Scrutiny Member for a number of years for her contribution prior to her appointment to the Cabinet.

Councillor England noted the high profile work of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the future of hospital provision in Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire and of the continued monitoring by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee regarding the multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation. Whilst these were significant areas of work, Scrutiny's remit was wide-ranging and report set out the highlights of each Committee's work programme during the year. Councillor England noted Scrutiny Members were not experts in the areas under scrutiny and thanks Officers, service users and other parties for their valuable contributions which had informed Scrutiny's work. He also expressed thanks to former Scrutiny Team Members, Fiona Bottrill and Stephanie Jones, who had recently left the authority.

31. Recommendations from Boards and Committee

Audit Committee

Corporate Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy – 2016/17 Annual Report and Policy Update

RESOLVED – that the updated Corporate Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy be adopted

32. Questions

The following questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.2:-

- (i) Councillor P J Scott asked the following question of Councillor R A Overton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement

"The areas in and around Newport are regularly being visited by unlicensed scrap dealers who trawl the town looking for easy hits on scrap. Some are going further and taking other items that are not put out for scrap therefore causing some distress to local residents. Locally we do inform the Licensing team and the police as incidents happen. What more can the council do to help us rid the town of these unlicensed dealers and are there any plans for further enforcement to help combat it?"

Councillor Overton responded that Scrap Metal Collectors were governed by the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and all traders who collected scrap required a Scrap Metal Collector Licence.

Between October 2013 to October 2016, the Council licensed 30 Scrap Metal Collectors.

Since October 2016, despite making contact with the traders, only 16 Scrap Metal Collectors had renewed their licence.

Since February 2017, the Licensing Service had received a number of calls from one particular licensed scrap metal trader. He had complained that the area of Newport had been targeted by a number of unlicensed traders. Licensed traders had been asked to help the Licensing Team by taking a note of the vehicle and registration numbers, together with the location and dates & times of when the vehicle was seen.

The Licensing Team have had meetings with West Mercia Police to update Police Officers regarding the Scrap Metal Dealers Act so that we can work together to address this problem. They have been fully briefed on what to do in the case of witnessing an unlicensed scrap metal dealer.

In June 2017, as a result of intelligence provided, the owner of one vehicle was stopped by West Mercia Police. The driver was cautioned and then arrested for failing to produce a valid Scrap Metal Collectors Licence and the Licensing Service were undertaking prosecution proceedings.

On 4 July 2017, despite being cautioned and arrested, the owner of the same vehicle again appeared within the area of Newport and clearly this matter was extremely frustrating as neither the police or the Council had the power to actually seize the vehicle - our powers allowed for the individual to be prosecuted and that is exactly what was being done.

The Licensing Service was also making contact with all the legitimate collectors allowed to operate in the Borough, to seek their permission to add their details to our website, in an attempt to encourage members of the public to only use bona-fide licensed collectors

Councillor Scott noted that Local Police had suggested that Licensed Collectors could be badged in a similar way to taxi drivers and he asked whether this could be considered for implementation?

Councillor Overton replied that a press campaign had taken recently place entitled 'Let's See your Badge!' which all licenced scrap metal dealers had to display to

inform the public of the problem. The Council was also encouraging the public and Town and Parish Councils to be vigilant and report any unlicensed traders to the council. Further social media campaigns would take place to raise awareness and to ask for the public's support.

It was recognised that Newport was being routinely targeted. The Licensing Service and this Council were doing everything possible to address this matter. With a forthcoming enforcement exercise planned, and with an effective social media campaign it was hoped to successfully address concerns.

Further consideration would be given to badging Licensed Collectors.

(ii) Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor S Davies, Leader

“Is the leader in a position to provide the chamber, with details or actions he has implemented following the obviously preventable Grenfell Tower fire tragedy with

- (a) Confirmation that this authority has no buildings either owned or leased, which are encased with inferior or non-retardant fire materials.
- (b) Begun a process to engage with private owners, social landlords, developers to eliminate the possibility or risks to safety, substandard materials pose.
- (c) Agree to a cross party, independent scrutiny group to formulate a planning policy that can be incorporated into the new development plan which ensures developers will be expected to deliver the most stringent requirements of safety incorporated into any application for development above a height of six storeys.“

Councillor Davies responded that recent horrific incidents including the Grenfell fire and terrorist attacks in Manchester and London had quite rightly resulted in an emergency review of service provision and lessons learnt from these incidents had already been incorporated into this review.

- (a) All Council-owned buildings, including schools, had been checked for cladding issues and fire risk assessments had been reviewed, and regular contact with the Fire and Rescue Service had been made.

Central Government required Councils to supply details of any buildings owned and used for educational or residential purposes of four storeys or more: Councillor Davies confirmed that this Council did not have any that fell into this category.

None of the Council's buildings had been over clad.

The Government Property Unit were overseeing checks in relation to the use of Aluminum Composite Material (ACM) across priority buildings within the public sector such as schools and hospitals – however, the Council did not have any buildings of concern.

In addition, Building Control Officers had examined all residential buildings within the Borough over 18metres in height. There were four residential

buildings within this category, three of which were owned by Wrekin Housing Trust and the fourth in private ownership. None of these properties were clad with this material.

General support and guidance had also been provided to schools, and council core buildings regarding Fire Safety and Fire Risk Assessments.

- (b) The Council had been in contact with all social landlords in the Borough to ensure they had provided all the necessary risk assessment information to the Government around cladding risks. The Council was not aware that there were any concerns.

The Council was also in the process of communicating with licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), licensed premises and residential care homes reminding them of their duty under the Regulatory Reform Order and the Housing Act 2004.

In addition, the Council had been working with the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service over advice and guidance around fire safety within Tower Blocks within the Borough.

The unfortunate tragedy in London was subject to a public inquiry and the Council Building Control Team would comply with any recommendations that arose from this.

All new buildings and improvements were subject to Building Control Regulations which were set nationally and the Council were not able to vary these on a local basis. The Council Building Control Team had already engaged with social housing providers to ensure that they had received the Government guidance and advice to carry out fire risk assessments and ensure tenant fire briefings were current and to identify if any buildings contain aluminium composite material cladding.

- (c) Technically requirements of safety fell within the remit of Building Regulations which were not enforceable through either development plan policies or conditions. However with reference to the answers to questions (a) and (b), the Council was being proactive in its engagement with social landlords. Private owners and developers would, during the development process, need to comply with the building control regulations which would draw attention to any risks to safety or substandard materials

Councillor Bentley reiterated his request for a cross party, independent scrutiny group as set out above.

Councillor Davies repeated that developers were required to comply with Building Regulations which were not enforceable through either development plan policies or conditions and, if the Council attempted to vary these requirements, developers could mount a challenge through Judicial Review. The Local Government Association had issued a cross-party report on the issue of relaxation of regulations and lack of enforcement. The call for a Scrutiny Review was noted and, in light of

his comments above, Councillor Davies considered that Scrutiny should make its own decision as to whether to include this in the work programme.

- (iii) Councillor A J Eade asked the following question of Councillor R A Overton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement

“Would Councillor Overton clarify the status of sites H1 and H13 in the Local Plan now that the Inspector has recommended their removal from the Council’s Local Plan?”

Councillor Overton responded that the examination of the Local Plan included discussions on the proposed housing site allocations. Following those discussions, the Planning Inspector (Mr Michael Hetherington) suggested to the Council that a number of sites be removed from the list of allocations. This specifically covered those sites without planning permission, of which sites H1 and H13 were included. However, it was important to note that in issuing his advice, the Inspector had not made any announcement or comment on the merits, or otherwise, of any of the sites for housing development.

If, in due course, when the Local Plan was adopted and sites H1 and H13, along with certain other sites, had been removed from the list of housing site allocations, these sites would not be specifically allocated for housing use in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan. Consequently, all the sites removed would simply revert to being ‘un-designated’ land.

Councillor Eade asked whether if the land was not designated, would Councillor Overton consider protecting the land in perpetuity by including the land in the green guarantee?

Councillor Overton stated that the land would be classed as White Land and in his opinion the land should not be included in the green guarantee.

33. Notices of Motion

- (i) The Motion proposed at agenda item 13(i) was withdrawn by Councillor A J Eade with the agreement of Councillor N A Dugmore (seconder).
- (ii) To accommodate public interest, this Motion was considered out of order on the agenda prior to minute number 28.

Councillor C F Smith moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following Motion:

“This Council notes with grave concern that the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) are considering the overnight closure of the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) 24/7 Accident and Emergency Service (A&E) potentially from September 2017. We feel that this is yet again another attack on vital services provided at the PRH and appears inconsistent with previously made clinical arguments, including the location of the Women & Children’s Centre on the same site as the 24/7 A&E Unit.

As a result of this new development and previous attempts to move crucial services away from PRH, this Council no longer has confidence in SaTH's Management Board to deliver safe and sustainable health services.

This Council further calls for health provision to be configured in such a way at the Princess Royal Hospital as to attract the required number and quality of Consultants to facilitate the delivery of a safe and sustainable service.

As our local health services have now reached a crisis point, this Council calls upon the Secretary of State for Health to immediately intervene in this increasingly worrying situation.”

Neil Nisbet, SaTH's Finance Director and Acting Chief Executive was invited to address the motion. He read from a written statement which had previously been circulated to Members.

The Leader addressed the meeting, thanking Mr Nisbet for his attendance and noting that this issue was not about NHS Staff, but in his opinion the crisis which SaTH found itself in. He disagreed with SaTH's premise that a trauma unit could not be located at the PRH, considered the potential overnight closure to be disingenuous, pointed to building of the £28m Women's and Children's Unit in Telford due to clinical need, and doctors' preferences around where A&E should be. He urged a change among Senior Managers at SaTH and intervention from the Secretary of State and the Care Quality Commission. He concluded that NHS staff and local residents needed better and urged SaTH to listen to the views of the Council, local MPs and residents.

Councillor A J Eade welcomed the statement from Mr Nisbet but noted that residents deserved the best service to meet their ongoing needs. He pointed out that the situation described by SaTH had been ongoing for several years and he, therefore, questioned what SaTH had been doing to configure and safeguard services during that time. He questioned how local people could have confidence in SaTH based on their track record of lacking action and lamented proposals to shut A&E overnight.

Councillor W L Tomlinson echoed the sentiments above and considered that there was no coherent plan to deal with the issues being raised and a tipping point had now been reached when SaTH was no longer able to look after the best interests of local people and intervention was required.

Members engaged in a robust debate which included comments regarding the length of time that SaTH had been aware of the issues which could lead to potential overnight closures of A&E at the PRH, that SaTH's actions did not align with its vision statement and criticism of the configuration of services which had led to difficulties in recruitment. Issues were raised during the debate which related to the Future Fit programme but it was made clear by the Speaker that the motion was a separate issue about confidence in SaTH.

Councillor C F Smith concluded the debate by urging the Secretary of State to intervene. A vote was taken on the motion put forward by Councillor Davies which was CARRIED. In accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 9.5, a recorded vote on the motion was taken, the voting being as follows:

For: 45

Councillors J C Ashford, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E J Carter, L D Carter, E A Clare, S Davies, N A Dugmore, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, R C Evans, I T W Fletcher, J A Francis, C A Furnival, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, R T Kiernan, A Lawrence, J Loveridge, N C Lowery, C N Mason, A D McClements, R Mehta, J C Minor, L A Murray, T J Nelson, R A Overton, J Pinter, S A W Reynolds, S J Reynolds, H Rhodes, K S Sahota, P J Scott, J M Seymour, R J Sloan, C F Smith, M J Smith, B D Tillotson, K T Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley, P R Watling and D G Wright

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

Councillors A J Burford and R J Sloan

RESOLVED - that the motion be approved

The meeting ended at 8.42pm

Mayor:

Date: