

## BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN



### Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 26 July 2018 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, G K Cook, S Davies, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, R C Evans, I T W Fletcher, V A Fletcher, J A Francis, C A Furnival, E J Greenaway, J Jones, A Lawrence, J Loveridge, N C Lowery, C N Mason, A D McClements, R Mehta (Mayor), A A Meredith, J C Minor, L A Murray, T J Nelson, R A Overton, J Pinter, G C W Reynolds, 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 (Speaker), B D Tillotson, K T Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley, and D G Wright

#### **19. Prayers**

The Reverend Keith Osmund-Smith said prayers.

#### **20. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors N A Dugmore, K R Guy, M B Hosken, and P R Watling.

Councillor S L Barnes and R T Kiernan were also absent from the meeting.

#### **21. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors A J Burford and R J Sloan declared an interest in minute number 31(i), 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 and would abstain from the vote.

Councillor S P Burrell declared a pecuniary interest in minute number 31(i), Notices of Motion, and indicated that he would not take part in the debate or vote.

#### **22. Minutes of the Council**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 24 May 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

#### **23. Leader's Report & Announcements**

The Leader welcomed the Telford@50 Celebrations that had been taking place and noted that the combined attendance of the Carnival, Kite and Balloon Festival and St Georges Day event was over 62,000 people. Attendees were from far and wide and feedback was positive. The smaller events organised in the community were equally as important, bringing communities together. Telford@50 was laying strong foundations, with the impact of associated £2m Telford@50 legacy fund and match funding, including improving the Court area, installation of permanent lighting at

Ironbridge, a range of measures to tackle homelessness and the introduction of a Smart House.

Major new projects taking place included the Telford Footbridge, the first phase of which had been hoisted into place by the largest crane in Europe. Business was also booming with over 1000 new jobs as a result of the Land Deal and plans to open the Newport Innovation Park. NuPlace continued to go from strength to strength and the Rogue Landlords Task Force was cracking down on poor quality rented homes and helping Landlords increase the quality of premises.

He expressed thanks to all the young people involved in the Young High Street Challenge Initiative for their ideas and initiatives to revitalise High Streets.

Important progress had also been made on the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation and it was expected that a Commissioning Body would be in place by the autumn.

Finally, he expressed hope that Council Members would unite in support of the Motion to be considered later in the meeting against the planned closure of the Women's and Children's Unit and Accident and Emergency Department at the Princess Royal Hospital.

#### **24. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor commented upon the engagements he had attended since the Annual General Meeting and looked ahead to his charity launch event on 27 July 2018.

#### **25. Public Questions**

None received.

#### **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.

##### Green Guarantee and 'The Big Green Vote'

*Councillor A J Eade asked what other parcels of land were considered but not included in the green guarantee (ie left out) and how many of the green guarantee sites were on land already protected (ie playing fields etc). Why was there a delay to the favoured sites? What is the green guarantee worth as it does not necessarily protect spaces from being developed?*

Councillor J C Minor, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Green Spaces & Parks, responded that other local authorities in the West Midlands had been very interested in the concept of the green guarantee and were seeking details of the scheme. The scheme meant that the public areas or green spaces would be protected from development. Not all green spaces in the borough were owned by the Council and the Council could not control developers applying for planning permission. The

locations protected by the scheme had been chosen in accordance with local wishes. The Cabinet Member was very proud of the scheme.

#### Applying for Civil Parking Enforcement Powers

*Councillor E J Carter welcomed the report and asked for recognition for the commencement of this process by his previous Motion to Council.*

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Enforcement thanked the Leader and the Police and Crime Commissioner, for negotiating a financial offer which provided for a sound business case for the adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement Powers – a deal which was not available at the time of Councillor Carter’s Motion to Council.

#### The Telford Land Deal

*Councillor E J Carter asked for recognition that his emails in 2010 to Grant Shapps (then Housing & Local Government Minister) had sought the original handover of land from the Homes and Communities Agency.*

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development noted that no deal had been agreed under the Conservative Administration and the Land Deal had been signed by the Labour Administration in 2016 and was underpinned by the Labour Administration’s Growth Deal.

### **27. Recommendations from Cabinet**

#### Cabinet – 19 April 2018

##### (i) Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Together

**RESOLVED that provision be made for £350,000 from the 2017/18 projected underspend as a provisional estimate to meet the costs of the independent inquiry and that authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to use this budget as per the report.**

#### Cabinet – 31 May 2018

##### (ii) Service & Financial Planning Report 2017/18 Outturn and 2018/19 Update

**RESOLVED that**

- (a) **the Revenue outturn position for 2017/18 and related virements in Appendix 3 to the report which is subject to audit by the Council’s external auditors be approved;**
- (b) **the transfers to reserves and associated approval to the relevant Assistant Directors to spend the reserves detailed in section 5 and Appendix 2 be approved;**

- (c) 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;
- (d) the performance against income targets be noted; and
- (e) the key issues identified for 2018/19 be noted.

Cabinet – 12 July 2018

- (iii) Financial Management Report 2018/19 Update

**RESOLVED** that the changes to the capital programme as set out at appendix 1 be approved

## **28. Annual Scrutiny Report**

Councillor N A M England, Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board, presented the Annual Scrutiny Report for noting. Councillor England thanked the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team and all those who had participated in Scrutiny over the last year.

## **29. Recommendations from Boards and Committee**

Audit Committee – 29 May 2018

- (i) Review of the Audit Committee Terms of Reference

**RESOLVED** that the amended Terms of Reference be adopted.

- (ii) Corporate Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy – 2017/18 Annual Report and Policy Update

The Chair of the Audit Committee put on record his thanks to the teams involved.

**RESOLVED** that the updated Corporate Anti-Fraud & Corruption policy be adopted.

## **30. Questions**

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

1. *Councillor P J Scott asked the following question of Councillor Hilda Rhodes, Cabinet Member for Transport Roads and Broadband*

*“Many people now tell me that they cannot find a parking space in the Newport High Street area after 8.30am most days and some are now choosing to go elsewhere to do their shopping. This is a big concern for local traders. Given that the number of car owning residents and students using the Newport area car parks has risen sharply, have the Council any plans to either increase their own car parking spaces or supply any new ones?”*

Councillor Rhodes responded that the Council was aware of the parking challenges in Newport and had been working with the Town Council to look at options for improving the situation. The Council undertook a public consultation last year on converting some car parks in Newport to short stay which would have improved the availability of short stay. The Council was happy to review this again along with the option for the free parking tickets which had been successfully implemented in Wellington to improve parking capacity. Unfortunately there was limited available Council land to construct new car parking spaces in Newport Town Centre and any consideration of additional car parks or converting car parks to multi-storey would need significant capital investment supported by a robust business case. It was likely any capital investment into increasing parking would need to be recovered through charging which did not align with the Council's policy of keeping our Borough Town car parks free to use to support our high streets. An officer would be happy to meet with the Town Council to discuss plans once again.

*Councillor Scott indicated that the Town Council had identified space which could work in terms of more car parking spaces and asked if the Council would be inclined to assist financing such a venture if the Town Council was able to part fund?*

Councillor Rhodes advised that an officer would be happy to meet with the Town Council.

2. *Councillor P J Scott asked the following question of Councillor Rae Evans, Cabinet Member for People Services, Visitor Economy and Partnerships*

*"As a current Street Champion myself I note the good work done by these volunteers and encourage others to do the same. Newport benefits from a reasonable number of them. Street Champions do not seem to be well advertised across the borough as a whole as many residents say they have not heard of them. Are there plans to advertise the role more widely using various channels?"*

Councillor Evans responded that there were around 450 active Street Champions across the Borough. The current scheme differed from its original inception (which consisted of the provision of a high vis jacket and litter picking equipment) by attracting volunteers through their interests, eg Lawley Running Club who collected litter whilst running and Telford Friends of Shropshire Way who collected litter whilst rambling.

The scheme was promoted via a wide range of channels including the Council's website, and Volunteer Telford Website. Social media was actively used to promote the scheme: the Street Champions Facebook page had 1200 followers and the Twitter account had 580 followers. The Community Participation Team, responsible for the Street Champions Scheme, sent out a weekly newsletter to around 1700 people which also promote Street Champions when appropriate.

The Council worked closely with Town and Parish Councils and found it helpful for Parish & Town Councils to get to know the Street Champions living in their local areas so that they could link in with the work of the Parish Environmental Teams.

The Council also recruited Street Champions through local businesses such as Reassure, Capgemini, Enta and Denso.

Community Events promoted the Scheme and Junior Street Champion programmes were delivered in schools.

Ultimately, the Scheme was limited by the number of volunteers that could be safely and effectively managed and for this reason a managed and organic growth approach to the programme's development.

Councillor Evans had welcomed ideas for the further promotion of the scheme, and had introduced some changes herself, and encouraged all Councillors to consider how they might get involved with Street Champions in their areas, perhaps utilising some of their Councillor Pride Fund.

3. *Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor Shaun Davies, Leader*

*"I welcome the Leaders announcement of a £600k investment into the introduction of 20 MPH speed limits outside schools could he please tell me what this money will be spent?"*

Councillor Davies noted that the funding had been made available, from the managed budgets of the last financial year and as a result of the underspend generated by sound financial monitoring of the budget, to further improve safety outside of schools. 35 schools across the Borough would benefit from this investment and schools have been shortlisted based on a range of factors including the number of accidents and those that had not benefited from other recent investment through the highways capital programme, S106 or other funding sources. Work would take place on a phased approach over the next two academic years.

The measures delivered outside of each school would vary depending on each schools individual circumstances. Meetings had already being held with senior teachers and business managers of 15 of the first 35 schools to discuss their requirements in more detail. Measures could include 20mph zones, flashing signing, improved road markings, installation of bollards and other measures aimed at highlighting the schools presence to motorists and helping to reduce speeds.

The £600k investment should not be considered in isolation. The Council was also encouraging schools to work positively with the Council's Travel Telford initiatives including walking buses and getting parents to leave their car at home when taking their children to school. The Council was applying to adopt Civil Parking Enforcement powers from the police and this would come into force some time after the summer 2019.

This was about creating the conditions for safer routes to schools and outside schools and the initiative was in fact first piloted with the Mayor at Lawley Primary School.

*Councillor Bentley indicated that the 20mph speed limit along the A442 at Crudgington had resulted in many incidences of 'road rage' and accidents since its introduction. How would the 20mph speed limits be enforced?*

Councillor Davies noted that he had engaged positively with Councillor Bentley to introduce improvements outside the school in his ward but that ultimately it was for the Police to take robust action towards the enforcement of speed limits including investment from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) into various speed detecting devices for use by Police Officers and the Community. He suggested that Councillor Bentley could use his good relationship with the PCC to secure funding for Telford and Wrekin.

4. *Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor Shaun Davies, Leader*

*"In September 2017 a Motion tabled by myself and seconded by Councillor Paul Watling was unanimously agreed by this chamber. Can the Leader confirm if he has received a reply?"*

For clarification, the Leader noted the question related to the Speaker writing a strongly worded letter to the Government calling upon them to utilise their statutory powers to review sentences imposed on, particularly, individuals convicted of crimes which related to child trafficking. Councillor Davies indicated with regret, that no response had been received to the letter that was sent by the Speaker.

*Councillor Bentley noted that the Motion had been tabled as a result of the ringleader of perpetrators convicted as part of Operation Chalice being released on licence but he had been subsequently returned to prison. Would the Leader write to the relevant Government Department to ascertain the reason why the licence was revoked?*

The Leader responded that he had done some research into the Government's stance on this issue at the time. Dominic Raab MP, who had been Minister of State for Courts and Justice at the time, had stated that, despite the issues raised by this Council and others, the Government would not intervene in the case and refused to intervene in individual cases as a result. As the Motion referred to was a cross-party Motion, Councillor Davies believed that the Council should join together in condemning the Government for not intervening in that particular case and he was more than happy to write to the Minister for Justice to raise the issue of the recall, however, unfortunately as highlighted in many national examples including a Select Committee report, the Probation Service was under resourced and under staffed and was failing. The National Probation Officer had recently resigned over inadequacies in the provision of the Service. It was a disgrace that victims and survivors and interested community bodies had not been informed of the reasons for the recall or kept updated in regards to it. He thought that the Council should join together in order to seek a change of policy/course on this particular issue by the Government.

5. *Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor Hilda Rhodes, Cabinet Member for Transport Roads and Broadband*

*“Having been reappointed to the Cabinet do you intend any significant changes in approach to either the collection or spending of Highways S106 contributions from developers?”*

Councillor Rhodes responded that she did not.

6. *Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor Paul Watling, Cabinet Member for Children & Adults Early Help & Support*

*“What personal steps have you implemented in respect of behaviour standards within our schools?”*

Councillor S R Reynolds, as Cabinet Member for Employment, Education & Lifelong Learning responded to this question. She noted Councillor Watling was not able to attend the meeting but that she was happy to explain the wide reaching support that had gone into schools to enable schools to better meet the needs of young people and therefore improve standards of behaviour.

This included

- A ‘Fair Access Panel’ that in addition to its statutory function of providing school places for ‘Hard to Place’ young people, also provided additional support and guidance on strategies to address behaviours.
- A team of Inclusion Mentors working directly in schools, alongside school staff, to implement strategies to address behaviours for young people.
- The Provision of Pupil Referral Units (PRU), over and above the statutory placement of permanently excluded young people, to provide assessment and intervention places and when a young person was reintegrated back into mainstream there was support and advice available for schools.
- The Linden Centre PRU, had also provided outreach support directly to mainstream schools to implement behaviour strategies.
- Additional capacity in specialist provision had been added for young people where their behaviour met the threshold for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for Social Emotional and Mental Health needs.
- The Inclusive Schools Forum was a school led forum where schools could ask for additional advice and potentially additional funding to better support those young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs but who were below the threshold for an EHCP.
- A conference was held in the spring of 2018 for schools to share concerns and strategies to support behaviour and inclusion of young people. As a result of that conference a number of proposals had gone out to schools for consultation, the responses of which would form the basis of the new overarching Behaviour Inclusion Strategy which would begin in the new academic year.
- A new Behaviour Support Team Leader had been appointed to start in September 2018. His role would include working directly with schools to review policy and practice and suggest next steps.

This was just a brief outline of the many steps that the Council was working on with schools regarding behaviour standards in the context of limited government funding which had nationally resulted in the loss of Teaching Assistants from the classrooms and specialist provision for children.

7. *Councillor S Bentley asked the following question of Councillor Richard Overton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement*

*“Will the Cabinet Member give a commitment tonight that an urgent review of the Local Development Plan will begin immediately following the August recess?”*

Councillor Overton responded that it would not.

*Councillor S Bentley asked whether, before endorsing the recently adopted Local Plan, the Cabinet Member had read and compared the policies from the Wrekin Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework guidance in relation to the policies that had been adopted?*

Councillor Overton noted that the newly adopted Local Plan had been endorsed by Inspectors, and every Planning application was dealt with on its merits.

*Councillor E A Clare left the meeting*

### **31. Notices of Motion**

(i) Councillor A R H England moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following Motion:

"As we celebrate the 70th birthday of our beloved NHS, a proud national institution which delivers healthcare free at the point of delivery, this Council restates its absolute commitment in fighting for the retention of our consultant-led Women's & Children's Centre at the Princess Royal Hospital through the Future Fit process and have launched our NHS4ALL campaign to argue the case for why Option 2 is the better option.

It is completely illogical to move this Centre, which was built only 4 years ago at a cost of £28m and has been identified by SaTH as a clinical need for our town. That need has not changed and will not change in the future, with two-thirds of admissions identified as being from Telford & East Shropshire.

We are deeply concerned that the preferred Option 1 is the most expensive and therefore could limit further investment in much needed community health services across the whole of Shropshire & Powys. Option 2 would provide significant savings year on year, which could support better GP access, more community services and even a new cancer centre for our town. Option 2 reduces journey times for more patients and saves revenue monies and capital borrowing.

This Council will continue to question and challenge Future Fit proposals which are not future proofed. These proposals do not address the need to reduce admissions

to A&E, propose no extra funding for GPs, community care or adult social care and will result in all communities losing out in respect of their current access to emergency & planned care.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor R A Overton.

A robust and lengthy debate ensued which reflected on issues including the public perception of the consultation which was being clinician-led rather than community-led, the need for an evidence-based decision to be made, the clinical and demographic need to retain the Women’s and Children’s Unit at Princess Royal Hospital, NHS funding in general, the questionable costings of Future Fit and the lack of a third option. Members also urged local residents to take part in the consultation.

At the conclusion of the debate, a recorded vote was taken on the motion put forward by Councillor Davies which was CARRIED, the voting being as follows:

For:

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

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

Councillors A J Burford and R J Sloan

Councillor S P Burrell did not take part in the vote due to his previously declared pecuniary interest.

Councillor E A Clare had left the meeting.

**RESOLVED - that the motion be approved**

*Councillor C N Mason left the meeting*

(ii) Councillor A J Eade moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following Motion:

“This Council reaffirms its continued support of the unanimously accepted motion proposed by Councillor Andrew Eade and seconded by Councillor Nigel Dugmore on behalf of the entire Conservative Group brought before Full Council on the 1 May 2014, to oppose any proposals for the merger of Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Councils.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor I T W Fletcher.

Councillor A D McClements moved an amendment to add the following paragraphs to the Motion

“The Council note that this motion was amended by Labour administration to include senior roles and functions of the Authority after which it was subsequently unanimously agreed by full Council. This Council also notes for information purposes that this followed the motion by Labour administration on the same subject dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 2013 opposing any merger with Shropshire Council in which a recorded vote highlighted that the Conservative Group voted against.

This Council recognises the incredibly positive difference that councils in Telford and Wrekin have made to the area over the last 50 years, particularly Telford & Wrekin Council since its formation as a unitary Council 20 years ago.

This Council agrees that any such merger or shared services or key roles would result in an increase in the likelihood of

- No clear democratic voice for the people of Telford & Wrekin, to promote and champion our Borough
- No effective voice to support services at our local hospital
- A detrimental impact on inward investment and regeneration of our Borough
- Money being generated in Telford but spent in other parts of Shropshire
- A major dilution of senior management capacity and focus on local services
- The Council HQ being located in Shrewsbury, distant and remote from issues here
- An increase in Council tax
- Privatisation or closure of our leisure centres
- Library closures
- Car parking charges introduced in our local high streets

and would be detrimental to the communities of Telford & Wrekin.”

At the end of a robust and lengthy debate, which considered the impacts of any merger between the two Councils and the history of similar Motions before Council, a vote was taken on the amendment put forward by Councillor McClements which was CARRIED. In accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 9.5, a recorded vote on the amendment of the motion was taken, the voting being as follows:

For:

Councillors J C Ashford, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E J Carter, L D Carter, G K Cook, S Davies, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, R C Evans, I T W Fletcher, V A Fletcher, J A Francis, C A Furnival, E J Greenaway, J Jones, A Lawrence, J Loveridge, N C Lowery, A D McClements, R Mehta, A A Meredith, J C Minor, L A Murray, T J Nelson, R A Overton, J Pinter, G C W Reynolds, 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, and D G Wright

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Councillors E A Clare and C N Mason had left the meeting.

**RESOLVED - that the amendment be approved**

A vote was then taken on the Motion put forward by Councillor McClements 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:

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

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

Councillor P J Scott

Councillors E A Clare and C N Mason had left the meeting.

**RESOLVED - that the motion be approved**

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

**Mayor:** .....

**Date:** .....