

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 17 January 2019 at 6.00pm at The Place, Oakengates, Telford

Present:

Councillors S L Barnes, 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, V A Fletcher, J A Francis, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, M B Hosken, J Jones, R T Kiernan, A Lawrence, N C Lowery, C N Mason, A D McClements, R Mehta (Mayor), 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, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley, P R Watling and D G Wright

60. Prayers

The Reverend Keith Osmund-Smith expressed new year greetings and said prayers.

61. Apologies for Absence

Councillors S Bentley, C A Furnival, J Loveridge, A A Meredith, and K T Tomlinson.

Councillor J C Ashford was also absent from the meeting.

62. Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Davies declared an interest in minute number 68(i), Youth Justice Plan 2018/19, due to his work as a solicitor occasionally practising in the Youth Court.

Councillor A R H England also declared an interest in minute number 68(i), Youth Justice Plan 2018/19, due to his work in the Youth Court.

63. Minutes of the Council

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

Councillor A J Eade requested that the Speaker consider a requisition for an emergency motion to be debated on the topic of Future Fit but the request was declined on the grounds of predetermination of the Joint CCGs decision and that the request was outside of the Constitution.

64. Leader's Report & Announcements

The Leader reflected on the challenges of 2018 but noted a number of highlights in the form of Telford's 50th anniversary and the many associated successful events – he thanked all those involved. Looking ahead, the new year brought new challenges but he was confident in the Council's robust financial management strategy and

successful commercial initiatives. He noted that the Council had designated a record number of local nature reserves and 200 sites under the green guarantee and looked ahead to the implementation of civil parking enforcement. He reflected on the position with regard to hospital configuration and called on the Secretary of State to intervene. He also noted the removal of government grants and urged Councillors to work together.

65. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor commented upon the engagements he had attended since the meeting on 22 November 2018, in particular noting the numerous events he had attended over the festive period which had included dressing up as Santa Claus for the Princess Royal Hospital. He referred to the successful Charity Golf Day and Christmas Tea Party he had held in support his charity "Building Bridges" and looked forward to the upcoming Mayor's Bollywood Meets Hollywood Charity Ball on Saturday 9 February at the Telford Hotel & Golf Resort.

66. Public Questions

No questions were received.

67. 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.

Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2019-2021

Councillor A D McClements welcomed the strategy and asked if a response had been received from the Secretary of State in relation to the Motion debated at Full Council on 20 September regarding adding domestic abuse to the disqualification criteria for elected members.

Councillor R C Evans confirmed that a letter had been sent to Mr Brokenshire but that no response or acknowledgement had been received; a further letter had been sent.

Councillor A J Eade commented that resourcing for the strategy should be a priority and asked for funding to a greater extent.

Councillor R C Evans noted that there was more funding than it appeared as there was resource input from different departments and partners which was not itemised.

Referencing the foreword of the strategy, Councillor V A Fletcher asked how intervention would take place and how perpetrators of abuse would respond.

Councillor R C Evans referred to the action plan that sat behind the strategy and that officers would be reporting on this to her. She noted that domestic abuse was the responsibility of all but it was more challenging to address when there was less money available to resource tackling the issue and ultimately the government held the biggest responsibility.

Applying for Civil Parking Enforcement Powers

Councillor E J Carter asked for recognition that it was a Conservative motion that brought this issue to the fore.

Councillor R A Overton acknowledged that a Motion had been tabled in July 2016 but that the cost to the Council at that time would have been £200K. The Leader had since successfully negotiated with the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide transitional funding which covered this cost.

Councillor T J Nelson expressed concern that the proposed number of neighbourhood enforcement officers would be sufficient.

Councillor R A Overton noted that the Police were not currently undertaking enforcement hence the application by the Council to take on these powers. Recruitment plans were in place with the proposal being that Officers would also undertake environmental enforcement issues on the basis of education first and not chasing targets for fines.

Councillor P J Scott welcomed the Council's application for CPE powers but also expressed concern at the number of wardens. He asked whether there was any possibility that the powers could be devolved to parishes.

Councillor R A Overton responded that existing partnership agreements with parish and town councils should continue.

Declaration of Dawley Pools and Pit Mounds Local Nature Reserve

Councillor S J Reynolds welcomed the declaration of Local Nature Reserves in the borough alongside the green guarantee and asked whether confirmation could be provided that the Cockshutt would soon be declared a Local Nature Reserve.

Councillor J C Minor advised that consultation was taking place and, subject to the associated financial and legal arrangements, he was hopeful that a declaration would be made regarding this site.

68. Recommendations from Cabinet

Cabinet – 13 December 2018

(i) Youth Justice Plan 2018/19

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member: Children & Adults Early Help & Support, presented the report of the Director of Children's and Adults Services.

RESOLVED that the Youth Justice Plan 2018/19 be approved and endorsed and that the West Mercia YJS responsibilities be noted.

(ii) Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2019-2021

Councillor R C Evans, Cabinet Member: People Services, Visitor Economy & Partnerships presented the report of the Assistant Director for Health and Wellbeing together with the Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2019-2021 for noting.

Cabinet – 3 January 2019

(iii) 2018/19 Financial Management Report

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services and Economic Development, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance & HR (Chief Financial Officer).

RESOLVED that the changes to the capital programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

69. Setting of the Council Tax Base for 2019/20

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services and Economic Development presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance & Human Resources (Chief Finance Officer) which determined the Council Tax base for General and Special Fund purposes for 2019/20. Upon being put to the vote, it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that

- (a) the calculation of the tax base for 2019/20 as at paragraph 5.8 and Appendix 1 to the report be approved;**
- (b) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914), the amount calculated for Telford and Wrekin Council Tax base for 2019/20 for its Special Fund Area shall be as per the appropriate parish amounts detailed in Appendix 1 to the report for the parishes listed in paragraph 5.9 of the report;**
- (c) the policy to exempt young people leaving Council care and living within the Borough from Council Tax as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved; and**
- (d) the changes to the council tax premium on empty dwellings, detailed in paragraph 5.5 of the report be approved.**

70. Questions

The following question was asked under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.2:-

- (a) Councillor Andy Burford asked the following question of Councillor John Minor, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Green Spaces & Parks.**

Dawley Hamlets Parish Council has recently been responsible for the establishment of the Dawley Pools and Pit Mounds Local Nature Reserve. Can the Cabinet Member outline the progress made to date with the creation of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) across the borough and the role played by Parish and Town Councils in initiating them.

Councillor Minor responded by expressing thanks to Dawley Hamlets Parish Council and Dawley Town Council (particularly Councillors Andy Burford, Concepta Cassar, Alan Scott and Steve Barnes of Dawley Hamlets and Ben Penfold amongst others) who had been central in the establishment of the Dawley Pools and Pit Mounds Local Nature Reserve.

A key part of the Parish Councils' work has been supporting the development of a Local Friends group – who like many others linked with individual LNRs across the Borough, were absolutely central to the maintenance and enhancement of these sites.

The Telford and Wrekin Local Plan identified the potential to declare 17 LNRs. To date, 15 had been approved by this Council including:

- Ketley Paddock Mound
- Apley Woods
- Rough Park
- Randlay Valley
- Lightmoor, and
- Dawley Pools and Pit Mounds

Lillishall Hill would be brought to Cabinet in March.

As a result of action by the Council working with Parish and Town Councils and local communities, the Borough would have three times the national standard LNR provision

These sites would also form one of the largest linked networks of Local Nature Reserves in the West Midlands.

In Telford and Wrekin, Parish and Town Councils played an important role in creating LNRs. Whilst the declaration process was managed at the borough level Parish and Town Councils contributed to consultations on site boundaries, helped in identifying site management requirements and were central to the establishment of friends groups.

Parish and Town Councils also continued to support the sites following declaration. They championed the sites and made financial contributions, which was vital to the management of the sites and being able to attract external funding.

The Council placed great importance on the protection and ensuring access to, the natural environment across the Borough.

The LNR network also supported the Council's commitment to health and wellbeing providing accessible green spaces for the whole community to enjoy.

71. Notice of Motion

None received.

The meeting ended at 6.51pm

Mayor:

Date: