

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 24 November 2016 at 6.00pm at The Haybridge Restaurant, Telford College of Arts & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

Present:

Councillors J C Ashford, S L Barnes, S Bentley, 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 (Mayor), I T W Fletcher, V A Fletcher, J A Francis, C A Furnival, K R Guy, M B Hosken, J Jones, R T Kiernan, A Lawrence, J Loveridge, N C Lowery, A D McClements, 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 (Speaker), B D Tillotson, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley, and P R Watling

48. Councillor C P R Mollett and past Councillor Christine Mackenzie

The Mayor noted the sad passing of Councillor Clive Mollett. She extended sympathies to Councillor Mollett's family and noted his contribution to the Council over the years, particularly the Scrutiny function where he had most recently served as a Member of Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee.

The Mayor further noted the sad passing of past Councillor Christine Mackenzie and extended sympathies to her family, noting her previous contribution to the Council.

49. Prayers

The Reverend Keith Osmund-Smith said prayers.

50. Apologies for Absence

Councillors K T Blundell, M Boylan, E J Greenaway, C N Mason, A A Meredith, M J Smith, K T Tomlinson and D G Wright

51. Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Davies declared an interest in minute number 57(ii) (Youth Justice Plan 2016/17) due to appearing in the youth court from time to time as a solicitor and that his employer prosecuted on behalf of the Youth Offending Team. He indicated that he would not take part in the debate.

Councillor A R H England declared an interest in minute number 57(ii) (Youth Justice Plan 2016/17) due to his position as a Justice of the Peace and indicated that he would not take part in the debate.

52. Minutes of the Council

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2016 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 6 October 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

53. Leader's Report & Announcements

The Leader expressed disappointment in the Autumn Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in terms of the impact it would have on Council budgets due to the lack of recognition of the funding pressures facing Adult Social Care. He went on to update the meeting on the PRH4Me campaign and the actions he had taken as part of the campaign to keep both Accident and Emergency Departments open. The Leader continued by updating the meeting on continued efforts to improve the Borough, including the launch of Enterprise Telford, a TeenTech event supported by Maggie Philbin at Enginuity and innovations as a result of Pride in Your High Street funding. The Leader reported that the Council had been presented with the Silver Award from the Employer Recognition Scheme. Drawing his comments to a close, the Leader offered his best wishes to all Councillors, Officers and Residents for a happy Christmas.

54. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reminded the meeting that the annual White Ribbon Awareness Day would be held on Friday, 25 November at Meeting Point House from 1-2pm. Telford and Wrekin had been a White Ribbon town for three years and the awareness day was inspired by The White Ribbon Pledge which supported men who campaigned to step up and positively make a stand to support ending domestic abuse against women. The Mayor noted that the effects of domestic abuse upon victims, their children and families and in some tragic cases could lead to death. The Mayor called upon all Members to support White Ribbon Day and looked forward to one day there being an ending of violence against everyone.

55. Public Questions

No questions were received.

56. 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.

Proposed Consultation on School Organisation Including the Re-Designation of Attendance Areas

Councillor A J Eade asked if the Cabinet Member understood the issues around the lack of public transport from Muxton to the Priory School for pupils who were currently bussed to Newport and the effect that additional car traffic would have on the highway infrastructure in that locality.

Councillor G C W Reynolds responded that discussions were taking place to improve public transport but that there was a bus (route number 5) between Muxton and Wrockwardine Wood which ran in the morning in time for school, eg picking up at the Post Office and dropping off at the Lamb Inn, a short distance from the School.

Councillor A J Eade also asked if the Cabinet Member understood that due to the Council having not collected developer contributions for five years and the Council not qualifying for Free School funding, there was no money available for future secondary school build and how and when did she propose to do that?

Councillor G C W Reynolds responded that the Council did seek developer contributions from S106 monies.

Councillor A J Eade noted that he had previously requested information regarding the number of secondary school places currently available in the borough and the projected number of secondary school pupils who would require places over the next few years.

Councillor G C W Reynolds had not been aware that this information had previously been requested. She was able to confirm the number of surplus places in Telford & Wrekin as follows:-

- Primary places – 8.6% surplus which equated to 1443 pupil places, at least enough for three years
- Secondary places – 12.4% surplus equating to 1547 places

Councillor V A Fletcher noted that the changes to school boundaries would bring Muxton into the catchment area of Telford Priory School. The number of homes with planning permission in Muxton and Priorslee equated to an extra 6500 new homes in the catchment and, based on DfE guidelines, this resulted in a potential increase of 1600 pupils by 2030. As the cost of building a new secondary school far exceeded savings on school transport, she asked what plans were in place to deal with the potential rise in school places?

Councillor G C W Reynolds requested that Councillor Fletcher send the full question to her for a complete response. She responded that the Secondary School in Priorslee would not have been built without the current administration's policy on Building Schools for the Future. She pointed out that the savings on home to school transport was not the reason for the report; the report was to define the next few years of school places and to ensure that places were sustainable going forward. The proposals were not driven by cuts.

She further responded that Priorslee was also part of the catchment area for Holy Trinity Academy as well as the Telford Priory, so there was more than one school which pupils could attend. Furthermore, the proposed homes would result in a year on year attendance rather than an influx. The report incorporated all known and projected buildings. Councillor Reynolds suggested that Members could make their views known through the consultation.

Councillor N A Dugmore asked if it was acceptable to ask children as young as 11 to walk more than a mile to catch a bus to school in an urban area and how that sat with protecting children in the borough.

Councillor G C W Reynolds responded that this was acceptable and in accordance with the Council's statutory duties.

Highways Asset Management Policy and Strategy

Councillor N A Dugmore asked whether the Cabinet Member agreed that management of Contractors need to be reviewed due to the delays incurred in completing work on roundabouts in the borough and that only due to public pressure had the utility companies had been pressed to complete necessary works.

As similar questions were due to be asked at minute 58, Councillor A D McClements indicated that she would respond in writing.

Pride in Your High Street Update

Councillor N A Dugmore asked why the statements in the report were not checked with the relevant Parish Councils as in 4.10 of the report, the Donnington events attributed to Pride in Your High Street had no involvement from Pride in Your High Street.

Councillor G C W Reynolds responded that she would reply in writing, however, she noted that Donnington had benefited greatly from Pride in Your High Street funding, including Easter events.

2016/17 Financial Management Report

Councillor I T W Fletcher referred to the sum of £650K allocated to St Georges, of which £300K had been delayed to the following year leaving £350K remaining for the current year and of this, only £59K had been spent, leaving £290,697 unallocated. He asked for assurances that St Georges would not lose the allocated funds and what would happen with the funds.

Councillor L D Carter responded that he would provide a written response and gave an assurance that St Georges would not lose out. Additionally, he noted that there had been a lot of other good things happening in St Georges mainly as a result of Pride in the High Street funding and over £10K of officer time had been dedicated to St Georges to get the benefit of the money and so that the Gower Centre would be opened for the community to enjoy.

57. Recommendations from Cabinet

Cabinet – 13 October 2016

(i) 2016/17 Financial Management Report

Councillor L J Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance & HR (Chief Financial Officer).

RESOLVED that the changes to the capital programme in section 1 of the report be approved

(ii) Youth Justice Plan 2016/17

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Communities, presented the report of the Director of Childrens' and Adult Services.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 be approved and the West Mercia YOS responsibilities be endorsed; and**
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Community Safety Partnership to oversee the Implementation of the Youth Justice Plan.**

(iii) Enterprise Telford – Driving Growth and Prosperity

Councillor L J Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the PIP be granted approval to undertake prudential borrowing to undertake the acquisition and disposal of PIP assets and/or investments in strategic infrastructure, following approval of the business cases as outlined in the report**
- (b) the necessary changes to the capital programme and revenue budget to facilitate the ongoing rationalisation of the PIP and strategic investments as outlined in the report be approved**

Cabinet – 17 November 2016

(i) Ensuring Children are Fully Protected in Telford and Wrekin – Getting to Good

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Communities, presented the report of the Director of Childrens' and Adult Services and Independent Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board which was provided following the Motion to Council on 22 September 2016. Councillor Watling moved the following alteration to the motion:-

“That Council endorses the measures set out by the Director of Children’s & Adult Services and Independent Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board for raising all Children’s Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of good and for ensuring that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in the future”

The consent of the meeting was given without discussion and in accordance with the Constitution.

The Speaker exercised his discretion to allow Mr J Campion, the Police and Crime Commissioner; Mr A Mason, the Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board; and Ms C Burgess, the regional representative of the Local Government Association, to make short statements to the meeting with no questions permitted.

At the end of a robust and lengthy debate, a vote was taken on the altered motion which was CARRIED. In accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 9.5, a recorded vote on the altered motion was taken, the voting being as follows:

For: 27

Councillors A J Burford, L D Carter, E A Clare, G H Cook, S Davies, A R H England,
N A M England, R C Evans, K R Guy, J Jones, J Loveridge, A D McClements, J C Minor,
L A Murray, R A Overton, J A Pinter, G C W Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, S J Reynolds,
H Rhodes, K S Sahota, P J Scott, R J Sloan, C F Smith, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley and
P R Watling.

Against: 0

Abstentions: 18

Councillors J C Ashford, S L Barnes, S Bentley, S P Burrell, E J Carter, N A Dugmore,
A J Eade, I T W Fletcher, V A Fletcher, J A Francis, C A Furnival, M B Hosken, R T Kiernan, A Lawrence, N C Lowery, T J Nelson, J M Seymour and B D Tillotson.

RESOLVED that the measures set out by the Director of Children’s & Adult Services and Independent Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board for raising all Children’s Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of good and for ensuring that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in the future be endorsed

58. Recommendations from Boards and Committee

Audit Committee - Appointment of External Auditors by 31/12/17 for April 2018 Onwards

RESOLVED – that opting into the Public Sector Audit Appointment Ltd (PSAA) for the purpose of appointing External Auditors for 2018/19 onwards be approved.

Boundary Review Committee - Review of Parliamentary Constituencies: Council Response

Following a request by the Main Opposition, the Speaker put each recommendation to the vote individually. Recommendation (a) received unanimous support whereas recommendation (b) was carried by a majority.

RESOLVED – that

- (a) that an alternative name of ‘The Wrekin and Bridgnorth’ be proposed to the Boundary Commission for England and;**
- (b) that the proposals submitted by the Boundary Commission for England are supported by the Council.**

58. Questions

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

- (a) Councillor I T W Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor A D McClements, Cabinet Member: Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services**

“Would the Cabinet member for Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services please advise residents of Telford what lessons have you learnt from the delays that have been incurred during the work being carried out on Limekiln Roundabout?”

(b) Councillor T J Nelson asked the following question of Councillor A D McClements, Cabinet Member: Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services

“Please can the Cabinet Member for Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services give an update of progress to completion of the Clocktower roundabout works?”

(c) Councillor R T Kiernan asked the following question of Councillor A D McClements, Cabinet Member: Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services

“Would the Cabinet Member for Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services confirm the cost so far for the Construction of the New Roundabout at Shawbirch? Very slow progress seems to be made in getting this project completed with very few men actually working, and machines standing idle. In fact only two or three men on site, at one time, and they were only reseeding with grass. What are they waiting for? The snow to arrive before the tarmac is laid, or are we going to get a surprise in the middle of the island, not another Magic Roundabout.”

Councillor A D McClements responded to the questions en bloc. She explained the background to securing £20m Local Enterprise Partnership funding to invest in the road network to provide capacity to cater for future growth by improving six major junctions in the borough and that the deadline for delivery was March 2017.

Works at Limekiln roundabout had begun in February 2016 and had been due to complete in July 2016. All utility companies which needed to arrange diversions had been notified of the works in April 2015 and all of the utility companies had completed work within agreed deadlines with the exception of Severn Trent which had repeatedly failed to meet deadlines. Councillor McClements explained the discussions she had had with the Chief Executive of Severn Trent in this regard, that a letter of complaint had been issued from the Council to Severn Trent, a press release had been issued to explain the position to local residents and that the Chief Executive had been invited to this meeting of the Council to be held accountable but had declined. Councillor McClements had now received a response from Severn Trent that works would be completed by 5 December and, the contractor had indicated they would be able to complete the works, weather permitting, before Christmas. She understood and shared the frustrations caused by the delayed works but lamented the fact that Severn Trent had shown little understanding of the delays and misery that had been caused due to their poor performance. The Council had done all it could to assist, encourage and force Severn Trent to undertake the works and had done everything possible to work with them to get the work done. The delays were wholly down to Severn Trent and formal action would be taken to hold them to account.

Councillor McClements informed the Council that Officers were reviewing what lessons, if any, there were to be learnt and were clear they had fulfilled all criteria required by the utility companies and given ample notice to work on the sites.

Councillor McClements advised that works at Shawbirch had been anticipated to be complete by mid-November. Again, there had been issues with Severn Trent which had also been subject to discussion and completion was not expected by the end of January

2017. Again, Councillor McClements shared the frustration of the local community and would do all that she could to keep pressure on Severn Trent and the contractors to complete the work.

Additionally, Councillor McClements advised that works at the Clock Tower were anticipated to complete by February 2017, weather permitting. The issues at this site were not the same as those at Limekiln and Shawbirch and were not anticipated to impact upon the final completion date.

Councillor I T W Fletcher asked a supplementary question seeking reassurance for residents that the Council would take steps to make contractors complete work by given deadline dates. Councillor McClements reiterated that all utility companies had been given sufficient notice of the work and only Severn Trent had failed to complete work on time. Councillor McClements had requested that Severn Trent keep her updated and keep to the new 5 December deadline.

Councillor T J Nelson noted widening of the Clock Tower roundabout and improvements to the entry/exit arms aimed to provide additional capacity sufficient to provide capacity to cater for future growth up to 2031. He asked what percentage of new homes granted planning permission had been factored into the calculation to future proof the improvements. Councillor A D McClements responded that she would provide a written response.

Councillor R T Kiernan did not ask a supplementary question.

59. Notices of Motion

None received.

The meeting ended at 8.38pm

Mayor:

Date: