

Minutes of Meeting of the Full Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 14 December 2010 starting at 6pm
Present: Councillor L Rimmer (Chairman)

Councillors:

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| P Ainsworth | E M H Ranson |
| J E Alcock | M Robinson |
| R Adamson | J Rogerson |
| D A Berryman | C Ross |
| S Brunskill | I Sayers |
| D C Eccleston | G Scott |
| R Hargreaves | R E Sherras |
| J B Hill | D T Smith |
| T Hill | J S Sutcliffe |
| B Hilton | M E Sutcliffe |
| K Hind | D Taylor |
| S A Hirst | M Thomas |
| J Holgate | R J Thompson |
| S Hore | J Waddington |
| B Jones | N C Walsh |
| A M Knox | J White |
| C Punchard | A Yearling |

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Resources, HR Manager, Legal Services Manager.

The meeting began with a minute's silence in memory of Mr Les Nevett, former Mayor of the Borough who had recently died.

534 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Canon Norman Atty, opened the meeting with prayers.

535 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Elms and M Fielding.

536 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

537 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation.

538 MAYORAL PRESENTATION

The Mayor made a presentation to Peter Hothersall who had retired from the Council in October after 23 years of service. The Mayor thanked Peter for his service and presented him with a gift on behalf of the Council. The Leader of the Council also thanked Peter for the excellent service he had given to the authority over the years.

539 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 October 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with an amendment excluding Councillor Farnsworth from the list of those present.

540 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on a wide range of engagements that she had attended since the last meeting. These had included:

The best kept village award where Ribble Valley villages had achieved success in several categories;

Several school and college award ceremonies that had celebrated the achievements of both young and adult learners;

She had opened an exhibition of paintings of local 'unsung heroes' at the Castle Museum and the Kaleidoscope exhibition at the Platform Gallery.

The Mayor had also held a successful reception for Parishes and had undertaken a tour of BAE Systems new production plant.

541 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E M H Ranson, reported on the Secretary of State's announcement regarding the provisional grant settlement for 2011/12 and 2012/13. He reported that the Director of Resources had sent an e-mail to all staff and Members setting out a summary of the position for the forthcoming year. He confirmed that more information would be provided to the Budget Working Group the following day. The grant settlement had been tougher than had been expected, and the Secretary of State had admitted that more weight had been given to those parts of the country with the highest levels of need and indeed had provided additional grants to help those Councils in the most deprived areas including many of the Council's neighbours. This had meant less money for other Councils. Figures announced showed a 15% reduction in the Council's formula grant for next year rising to 25% in 2012/13. In broad terms this meant that the Council would need to save £500,000 next year and £1,000,000 the year after. The Leader recognised that some difficult decisions would now have to be made. The main task would be to make the necessary savings, change how the Council operated its business and demonstrate that the Council could continue to be a well-run organisation.

The Leader then reported on the Localism Bill that had been published the previous day. This opened up new horizons for local government with more accountable decision making at a local level.

Next, the Leader updated Members on developments regarding the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Pennine Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, and confirmed that once a decision had been made on the LEP, he would report it, along with any related issues, to Policy and Finance Committee.

The Leader finished by thanking staff for their continued dedication and hard work through difficult times and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

542

LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Shadow Leader, Councillor A Knox, asked the Leader what action the Council was taking to promote the government's 'Home on the Farm' scheme that allowed farmers to convert existing buildings into affordable homes.

The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for his question and confirmed that the Council had not established a specific 'Home on the Farm' scheme as yet. However, the Council had, in practice, the opportunity to help facilitate the provision of affordable homes that accorded with the 'Home on the Farm' scheme through its existing policies and grant initiatives and officers would continue to seek to maximise those opportunities as they arose and resources allowed. In addition, in preparing the Council's Core Strategy, further consideration would be given as to how planning policies could be shaped to enhance the delivery of more affordable housing, especially where use could be made of existing buildings that could be suitably converted. He confirmed that officers would take account of the implications of the new Localism Bill, and in particular the 'Community Right to Build' initiative together with the 'Home on the Farm' scheme as part of the ongoing work on the Core Strategy.

Next, the Shadow Leader asked if the Leader would agree that meetings of the Standards Committee could be suspended until further notice.

The Leader reported that whilst the government had stated its commitment to abolish the standards regime, the most recent information available was that the necessary legislation would not receive Royal Assent until late in 2011, with the appointed date perhaps some two months later, probably in early 2012. The advice that had been given to all Councils was that the local standards regime still existed and therefore Standards Committee and Monitoring Officers had an obligation to keep the system operating.

Finally, the Shadow Leader asked if the Leader could confirm when he had changed his mind about support for a Pennine Lancashire bid for a Local Enterprise Partnership to support for a Pan Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Leader confirmed that the decision to change from a Pennine Lancashire bid to a Pan Pennine Lancashire bid had been taken as events had unfolded during November 2010 and in response to feedback from other Councils.

Councillor B Jones asked a question of the Leader referring to the recent disqualification of a former Councillor which had raised a number of issues. As a result, she asked

- a) what changes would be put in place to ensure that any future failures to attend were picked up automatically by the Council's attendance recording system;
- b) what checking procedures were in place to ensure that statements on the Council's website were correct; and
- c) what plans the Council had to put in place a more robust system of checking in and recording when Councillors did attend meetings and ensuring that apologies were recorded.

The Leader thanked Councillor Jones for her question and in response to the items outlined, confirmed that

- a) officers would look into the system and review it before the next election;
- b) placing of information on the Council's website was controlled by a small number of officers and was not checked by other officers; and
- c) the system for 'checking in' Councillor meetings would be reviewed in time for the next municipal year.

Councillor J B Hill then asked the Leader if he would support his representations to Lancashire County Council for more winter grit bins to be available in his ward and throughout the borough.

The Leader thanked Councillor Hill for his question and confirmed that he shared Councillor Hill's concerns about residents suffering because of isolation caused by the winter conditions. He noted that it was a problem that had arisen across the borough and was not restricted to Councillor Hill's ward. He could confirm that staff were aware of the issue and were alert to signs that householders may be suffering, especially elderly people who lived alone. He confirmed that the Council would continue to work with other agencies to investigate and be alert to signs of suffering this winter. He understood that Parish and Town Councils had been approached earlier in the year to identify potential opportunities for winter service delivery and he hoped that the County Council responded to any sites for additional grit bins that Read and Simonstone Parish Councils may have identified. He suggested that if there was a continuing problem in Read and Simonstone, Councillor Hill should alert the County Council so that any problems could be resolved.

543 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Planning and Development Committee – 7 October 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(ii) Emergency Committee – 21 October 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(iii) Community Committee – 2 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(iv) Planning and Development Committee – 4 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(v) Personnel Committee – 10 November 2010

The Mayor was pleased to present Councillor S Brunskill with certificates for achieving the Lancaster University Certificate in Professional and Personal Development (Community Champions) level 4 qualification. The Chairman of Personnel Committee also added his congratulations. The Chairman also thanked officers who had successfully completed equal pay negotiations which had finally reached conclusion after a number of years of hard work.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(vi) Health and Housing Committee – 11 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(vii) Policy and Finance Committee – 16 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of minute number 480.

MINUTE 480 – LICENSING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND ADOPTING THE SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE POWERS

Members were asked to approve the Council's revised Licensing Statement of Principles and to adopt the provisions of Schedule 3 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 as amended – Powers to Control Sexual Entertainment Venues.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve the amended Licensing Statement of Principles and adopt the powers in Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 relating to Sexual Entertainment Venues.

(viii) Parish Councils' Liaison Committee – 18 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(xi) Licensing Committee – 23 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(x) Accounts and Audit Committee – 24 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(xi) Planning and Development Committee – 25 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

(xii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 November 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received.

The meeting closed at 6.59pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).