

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 12 July 2011, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth	R Moores
J E Alcock	R Newmark
R Bennett	E M H Ranson
S Bibby	L Rimmer
S Brunskill	M Robinson
S Carefoot	C Ross
P Dowson	I Sayers
R J Elms	G Scott
R Hargreaves	R E Sherras
J B Hill	D T Smith
T Hill	R Swarbrick
B Hilton	D Taylor
S A Hirst	M Thomas
J Holgate	R J Thompson
K Horkin	N C Walsh
A Knox	J White
S Knox	A Yearling
G Mirfin	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Resources, Head of HR, Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

157 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Father J Scott, opened the meeting with prayers.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Holgate on the award of the MBE in recognition of her work in the community and suggested that there may be a small reception to celebrate the accolade when she had received it.

158 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor C Bartrop, D Berryman, K Hind and J Rogerson.

159 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

160 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation.

161 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26 April 2011 and of the Annual Council held on 17 May 2011, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

162 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on engagements that he had attended in his first two months in office. He had attended over 50 engagements so far which had included a visit of a member of the Royal Family to the borough, attendance at the Queen's Garden Party and a number of school visits. The Mayor had been particularly impressed by the talent and enthusiasm of the young people he had met on these visits. He was also pleased to have attended the launch of the Food Hygiene Rating System in Ribble Valley and could report that premises in the borough rated very highly. The Mayor thanked Councillors for support for his Civic Sunday.

163 REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

Consideration was given to the written report of the Chief Executive asking Members to approve the Members' Allowance Scheme as recommended by Policy and Finance Committee. He reported that the Council was required to establish a Scheme of Members' Allowances under the Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, and that the scheme should be subject to an independent review at least every 4 years. An independent remuneration panel had been established in November 2010 and the panel had met since November to carry out a review. As a result, a set of recommendations had been submitted to Policy and Finance Committee on 7 June 2011.

RESOLVED That

1. the report be received;
2. a new scheme of Member Allowances as attached to the report and including the amendments as outlined be approved;
3. an amendment be included that Members of the Planning and Development Committee be entitled to claim car allowance for site visits subject to further discussion at Planning and Development Committee; and
4. the Chief Executive write to Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel to thank them for their work in formulating a revised scheme.

164 RECRUITMENT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Consideration was given to the written report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services asking Members to approve the appointment of Pat Young and Paul Whittaker as Parish Council Members on the Ribble Valley Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: That Pat Young and Paul Whittaker be appointed as Parish Council Members on the Ribble Valley Standards Committee.

165 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by welcoming the Mayor to his first Council meeting in his new role and wished him a very happy and successful year in office. He also offered congratulations to Councillor Joyce Holgate on her award of the MBE.

The Leader stated that at the beginning of the four year cycle of the Council it was necessary to set out the ruling group's objectives. A full detailed set of objectives could be found on the Council's website. He outlined 7 key objectives:

1. **To maintain and increase the quality of life in the borough**

The Council should combat rural isolation, ensure that services were available for the most vulnerable and seek to ensure the maintenance and improvement of the transport network. The Council must continue its efforts to control and minimize litter and graffiti and must also continue to explore opportunities to increase the recycling of waste materials across the borough.

2. **Housing**

The Council must ensure that housing in the borough was adequate to meet the needs of the people with particular emphasis on the provision of affordable housing.

3. **Recreation and the arts**

The Council believed that it was essential for young people in the borough to have sufficient opportunities for recreational and sporting activities.

4. **Regeneration and economic development**

The Council should encourage economic development throughout the borough with a specific focus on tourism and the development of sufficient land for business development.

5. **Costs and finance**

Financial prudence was a key objective and the good practice to date must continue.

6. **Planning**

Planning would continue as a high priority for the borough and particularly in terms of the implementation of the Local Development Framework.

7. **Localism**

The Leader stated that the Council would embrace the localism agenda and encourage Parish Councils and local communities to take more responsibility where possible for the local delivery of services.

In addition to the general four-year objectives the Leader outlined key specific objectives for the 2011/12 municipal year, they were:

1. to finalise the Local Development Framework and Core Strategy;
2. to achieve a second phase of restructuring to enable the Council to continue to deliver excellent services within current financial restraints;
3. to maintain the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that whilst maintaining an excellent record in this area, the Council continued to provide help and assistance to the youth of the area to keep them off the streets and to provide personal development opportunities;
4. in light of the increase in the night-time scene in Clitheroe to emphasise and if necessary re-establish the alcohol free zone in Clitheroe and other parts of the borough;
5. to work with partners to ensure that the infrastructure in the Ribble Valley was improved so that it was fit for purpose for the 21st century;
6. to develop more strategic partnerships with GP's in the borough and where appropriate assist them in their responsibilities under the NHS reform.

Finally the Leader reported that the Core Strategy discussions and consultations would be completed during the next few months and he urged Members to encourage their communities to respond to the consultation.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Shadow Leader of the Council, Councillor A Knox, asked if the Leader could confirm how the public and Members were informed of licensing applications. The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for the question and confirmed that the Licensing Act 2003 made provision for numerous types of applications. The notice requirements varied depending on the type of application but could include site notices and a notice in the local paper. The applicant was responsible for all notification requirements relating to the application and that included a notice for 28 days on the premises and a notice in the local newspaper. The Council had no role in the notification procedure, however all applications were entered onto the public register and the Council's website as soon as they had been received. In a supplementary question, Councillor Knox suggested that it would be helpful if Members could be informed when a licensing application was made within their ward. Councillor Ranson agreed that this was a useful suggestion.

Next Councillor Knox asked the Leader what the average length of time was for an officer to respond to a Member's e-mail. The Leader reported that the Council did not have facilities for tracking how long it took for officers to respond to e-mail correspondence, either from Members or from the public. The number of e-mails received would make the cost of maintaining such a system prohibitive.

However, he did state that he would expect officers to respond promptly to e-mails from Members.

Finally Councillor Knox asked if the Leader could confirm how long Members had from the time of a decision being taken to call it in. The Leader confirmed that in accordance with Standing Order 13 a decision could be called in within 5 working days of the decision being published.

There was then one written question to the Leader presented by Councillor J B Hill. Councillor Hill asked if the Leader would comment on the policy of Lancashire County Council to charge children for bus travel to school in cases where they chose not to attend their nearest school. The Leader thanked Councillor Hill for his question and confirmed that the County Council had consulted on its proposals to introduce charges and despite a number of objections had decided to implement the charging system. He agreed with Councillor Hill that the decision should be reviewed.

167 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Emergency Committee – 13 April 2011

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

(ii) Planning and Development Committee – 28 April 2011

Councillor J B Hill asked two questions under Standing Order 9. Firstly Councillor Hill asked if the Chairman could explain what the Council's planning requirements were for the provision of parking facilities associated with housing developments in the borough.

The Chairman, Councillor R Sherras, thanked Councillor Hill for his question and confirmed that in relation to residential parking standards the department sought to comply with parking standards as recommended by Lancashire County Council ie one space for a single bed dwelling, 2 spaces for a 2/3 bedroom unit and 3 spaces for a 4 bedroom or larger unit. In assessing the proposals, the provision of adequate parking spaces was a material consideration. In some cases there may be rare circumstances where other material considerations could permit slight under provision of parking spaces, but the Chairman considered that normal standards would be required.

Next Councillor Hill asked that in respect of the need to ensure that unlawful development and planning conditions were properly monitored and action taken wherever possible to remedy any breach, could the Chairman confirm that he was satisfied that the Council had sufficient resources available to ensure that the Council was able to deliver an effective and efficient planning enforcement service. Councillor Sherras confirmed that the Council's Enforcement Officer post was currently vacant and the Head of Planning Services was considering various options which involved examining how to best utilise existing staff from within the section and elsewhere.

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

(iii) Community Committee – 24 May 2011

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

(iv) Planning and Development Committee – 26 May 2011

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

(v) Personnel Committee – 1 June 2011

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

(vi) Health and Housing Committee – 2 June 2011

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

(vii) Policy and Finance Committee – 7 June 2011

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

(viii) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 9 June 2011

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

(ix) Licensing Committee – 14 June 2011

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

(x) Standards Committee – 15 June 2011

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

(xi) Planning and Development Committee – 16 June 2011

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

(xii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21 June 2011

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

(xiii) Accounts and Audit Committee – 29 June 2011

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

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

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