

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 20 December 2011, starting at 6.00pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

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

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

593 PRAYERS

The Rev A Froud, opened the meeting with prayers.

The Mayor began by welcoming Councillor Ian Brown to the meeting following a by-election in the Salthill Ward of Clitheroe. He also noted the sad passing of former Mayoress Ruth Warkman, wife of former Mayor, Councillor Charles Warkman. Finally the Mayor thanked last year's Mayor, Councillor Lois Rimmer for the framing of the Freedom of the Borough Scroll which was now on display in the Council Chamber.

594 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Hargreaves, M Robinson and A Yearling.

595 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

596 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Bruce Dowles of Clitheroe, representing the Clitheroe's Torchlight 2012 Committee asked if Councillors or Officers could advise the Committee on how to

find potential sponsors/funding opportunities to cover the costs associated with inviting the band of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment to attend the procession on 25 August 2012.

The Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee, Councillor M Ranson, thanked Mr Dowles for his question and confirmed that he would ask officers to contact the Regiment to discuss ways to achieve the attendance of the band at the procession. Councillor Ranson also noted that Council Officers were providing a lead role in the planning and organisation of the event. He ended by placing on record the Council's appreciation to Peter Moore, the Chairman of the Torchlight Committee, for all he had done for Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley.

597 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 October 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

598 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on engagements he had attended since the last meeting. He had been to a number of school prize giving ceremonies, Carol Services and charity fundraising events across the borough. He had also visited the Mountain Rescue Team on one of their training days.

Finally the Mayor reported on recent new initiatives including Ribble Valley Homes' Affordable Housing Scheme, the Community Toilet Scheme and the launch of the Ribble Valley Arts Trail.

599 COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to a written report of the Chief Executive asking Members to determine Committee arrangements following the Salthill Ward Clitheroe By-Election on 17 November 2011. (Councillor A Knox left the meeting.)

RESOLVED: That

1. the number of seats and allocation of those seats be as outlined in Appendix A of the report; and
2. a new list of Committee Membership be circulated to all Councillors once seats had been allocated to individual Councillors.

600 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by welcoming Councillor Ian Brown to his first meeting following the recent by-election. He also congratulated Councillor Horkin on his Philanthropist of the Year Award.

The Leader then looked forward to the issues that would engage the Council and Officers in 2012. He referred to the Localism Act that was due in January and its implications, including the abolition of Standards for England.

The Leader noted that the economic situation was still poor and the restructuring of Local Government and public services would continue in the coming 12 months. The Leader noted that the Council had been subject to a dramatic reduction in funding and with no increase in Council Tax. He confirmed that the Council was working to finalise its budget for next year and expected to achieve further savings of £640,000 to produce a balanced budget.

The Leader went on to highlight some recent achievements of the Council eg the introduction of the Community Toilet Scheme, whereby shops and establishments were to make their toilets open to the public. Recent publicity on landlord and tenant grants had led to an increase in requests for such facilities and grants of between £10,000 - £15,000 had been made to enable Landlords to bring properties back into occupation. This was a vital initiative to support the vision of affordable housing in the borough. The Leader confirmed that together with key community organisations the Council had applied for funding from the Government's War Homes Fund which would allow Councils to provide warmer packs to vulnerable old people to reduce deaths and morbidity in the cold weather.

The Leader was pleased to report that parking charges were being waived at Council operated car parks in Clitheroe and Longridge town centres on Saturdays throughout December.

The Leader ended by thanking all the loyal staff within the Council for their hard work and dedication through 2011. Their input had been tremendous under difficult conditions.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor A Knox, had submitted three questions in advance of the meeting which the Chief Executive then presented.

Firstly Councillor Knox had asked when the Council would produce a strategy to deal with further cuts in public spending that would follow the current CSR (Competitive Spending Review).

The Leader confirmed that the Council had so far not been given any real indication of its Government grant beyond 2012/13 but there had been an announcement the day before on the main elements of the Local Government Resource Review. It appeared that many of the items the Council had asked for had been included in the Review and in particular:

- a recognition that up to date data should be used;
- that the new grant system should properly reflect the cost of services in rural areas; and
- that growth in Business Rates should be shared 80/20 in favour of districts in two tier areas.

He also reported that there had been two recent announcements on the Localisation of Council Tax Benefits and on changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. He noted that all of these would have a significant impact on the Council's finances beyond 2013. The Leader reported that the Director of

Resources and her staff would examine the announcements in detail and bring reports to a future meeting of the Budget Working Group.

Next, Councillor Knox had asked how much the Council had spent on the Arts, both directly and via grant funding.

The Leader reported that including such things as human creative activity through painting, music, literature, dance and culture studies etc, the total spend had been in the region of £357,500

Finally Councillor Knox had asked when the draft timetable of meetings for 2012/13 would be available.

The Leader confirmed that the timetable was prepared in draft form for Policy and Finance Committee to consider at its March meeting which was scheduled to take place on the 27 March 2012, prior to ratification at the Annual meeting in May.

Next Councillor J B Hill asked if the Leader would reaffirm the commitment of the Council to oppose any measures that might threaten the existence of rural post offices and wherever possible encourage Post Office Ltd to help outreach post offices to become more viable so that they could play a vital role in continuing to create a sustainable network of rural post offices.

The Leader thanked Councillor Hill for his question and agreed with the points raised. He confirmed that the Council would continue to try to keep post offices open and viable in rural area.

602 COMMITTEE MINUTES

(i) Emergency Committee – 6 October 2011

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

(ii) Full Council – 11 October 2011

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

(iii) Planning and Development Committee – 13 October 2011

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

(iv) Community Committee – 8 November 2011

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

(v) Planning and Development Committee – 10 November 2011

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

(vi) Personnel Committee – 16 November 2011

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

(vii) Health and Housing Committee – 17 November 2011

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

(viii) Policy and Finance Committee – 22 November 2011

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meeting be received with the exception of Minute Numbers 510 and 511.

MINUTE 510 – REVIEW OF POLLING STATIONS AND DISTRICTS

Members were asked to approve the proposals for polling districts and places in the Ribble Valley Parliamentary constituency as set out in a report to Policy and Finance Committee outlining the review of polling districts and places undertaken by the Elections and Electoral Registration Officer.

RESOLVED: That polling districts and polling places in the Ribble Valley Parliamentary constituency be approved.

MINUTE 511 – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Leader, Councillor M Ranson, asked Members to approve the revised Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED: That the revised Financial Regulations be accepted.

(ix) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 24 November 2011

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

(x) Licensing Committee – 29 November 2011

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

(xi) Accounts and Audit Committee – 30 November 2011

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

(xii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 6 December 2011

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

(xiii) Planning and Development Committee – 8 December 2011

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

The meeting closed at 7.35pm.

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