

COUNCIL FORUM
26th April 2012

PRESENT –*The Mayor Councillor Karimeh Foster (in the Chair), Councillors Akhtar, Bateson, Browne, Connor, Cottam, Daley, Davies, Desai, Doherty, Foster D, Gee, Graham, Gordon, Hardman, Harling, Hollern, Humphrys, Hussain F., Hussain I., Jan-Virmani, Johnson, Kay, Khan M., Khan Z., Khonat H. Khonat S, Law-Riding, Lee, Mahmood, McFall, Mulla, Nuttall, O’Keeffe, Oldfield, Patel, Pearson D., Pearson J., Rehman, Rigby C., Riley, Shorrocks, Slater Jacqueline, Slater Julie, Smith D, Smith James, Smith Joseph, Solkar, Surve, Talbot, Tapp, Taylor, Thayne, Walsh and Wright.*

RESOLUTIONS

85 Notice Convening Meeting

The Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

86 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Entwistle, Hirst, Jones, Maxfield, Meleady, Jean Rigby, Rizwan, Sidat and John Slater.

87 Minutes of the Meeting of the Council Forum meeting held on 26th January 2012 and the meeting of Finance Council held on 5th March 2012.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Council Forum meeting held on 26th January 2012 and the meeting of the Finance Council held on 5th March 2012 be approved as a correct record.

88 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest (Personal) in items on the agenda were received from the following Councillors:

Andrew Graham (Motion 2 – works for North West Ambulance Service)

Michael Lee (Motion 2 – Lay advisor to CCG)

89 Mayoral Communications

The Mayor updated the Council Forum on recent activities and events since the last Council Forum Meeting.

Reference was made to the Councillors who would be retiring from the Council (Cllrs Doherty, Rizwan, Jones, Meleady and Graham) and the

Mayor wished them well for the future. Particular reference was made to the long service of Councillor Doherty, who received a gift from the Labour Group, along with his wife Joan who received flowers. Leaders of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrats all made speeches about Cllr Doherty's distinguished service as a Councillor, Leaders of the Council and as Chair of the Police Authority.

The Mayor made reference to the Chair for the Mayor's Officer which had recently been installed in the Council Chamber. This had been kindly provided by Mr Stan Platt, son of former Mayor's Officer Harold Platt, who was in attendance and received thanks from the Mayor for his generosity.

The Mayor referred to the illness of Ben Aspinall and Diane Hill, in Democratic Services and passed her best wishes to both.

Congratulations were passed to Steve Hoyle, Managing Director of Regenerate Pennine Lancashire, who had been awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion.

Reference was made to the generous donation of £5,000 received from Accrol Paper to the Mayor's Charity. The company had also generously donated £5,000 to the East Lancs Hospice. The Mayor had also recently attended the opening of their new facility.

The Mayor's Ball and Mayor's Golf Day had both been very successful, with over £4,000 raised at the Mayor's Ball and £800 from the Mayor's Golf Competition for the Mayor's four charities.

The Mayor also referred to a letter received from Her Majesty the Queen in response to the Mayor sending a letter of congratulations for her Diamond Jubilee.

90 Council Forum

The Chief Executive advised that one question from members of the public under Procedure Rule 10, as follows:

From Mr Peter Rush to the Executive Member for Children's Services, Councillor Maureen Bateson:

In view of the disgrace of the impending compulsory redundancy of approximately 100 teachers and support staff in Blackburn with Darwen, as a direct result of the BSF programme, has the Council any plans to mount an investigation into how this tragedy has occurred?

Cllr Bateson provided a response and following a supplementary question by Mr Rush Cllr Bateson provided a further response.

Mr Rush also submitted a petition which Cllr Bateson advised would be submitted along with an accompanying report to the Executive Board, it was hoped for the June meeting.

91 Motions Submitted under Procedure Rule 12

The Chief Executive reported that two Notices of Motion that had been submitted under Procedure Rule 12.

MOTION 1

This Council notes:

- *The success in bringing down road casualties in recent years in Blackburn with Darwen. However, much more must be done to reduce this figure further.*
- *The importance of reduced speed in reducing the risk for pedestrians and other road users.*
- *Research from UK and abroad that has shown town-wide urban speed limits around 20mph have: significantly reduced speeds in just the first year of operation; after several years in operation reduced urban accident rates by up to two-thirds (with numbers killed and seriously injured reduced by even more); encouraged walking and cycling, especially for the elderly and younger children; benefited communities, with residents a quarter more likely to stop and talk on footpaths; increased the journey time of a 15 minute journey by just 1 minute; reduced vehicle emissions by 12% due to less acceleration and deceleration; and been supported by 72% of drivers surveyed as part of the British Social Attitudes Survey.*

This Council welcomes:

- *Recent changes announced by Liberal Democrat Transport Minister, Norman Baker MP to Department for Transport rules making it easier for councils to introduce changes to 20mph speed limits.*

This Council believes:

- *That the implementation of a city-wide speed limit of 20mph on all non-major residential roads, combined with a public information campaign and innovative inexpensive traffic calming, would have an immediate beneficial impact on accidents and fatalities in the Borough.*

This Council:

- *Requests the Chief Executive to produce a report for the Executive Board on the feasibility of implementing a city-wide 20mph limit on all residential roads, excluding major routes as appropriate.*

Proposed by
Councillor David Foster

Seconded by
Councillor Chris Thayne

Councillor Dave Harling moved an amendment to the Motion, seconded by Councillor Dave Smith and this was circulated to Members:

Delete all from "Research from UK and abroad....." onwards

Add to This Council notes:

- *The progressive introduction of 20mph zones within Blackburn with Darwen over the last 14 years.*
- *Over 250 streets and roads are covered by existing 20 mph zones.*
- *That the Infirmary area is the first 20 mph Signed only area in the Borough.*
- *Signed Only areas have signs and road markings but no physical traffic calming measures and are cheaper to install than traditional 20 mph zones.*
- *As Borough-wide Signed Only schemes are only in their infancy, research into their effectiveness is limited.*
- *The government's introduction of Signed Only areas has an expectation that they will be self-enforcing and not rely on the Police to provide additional enforcement.*

This Council believes:

- *That a diverse range of road safety campaigns, traffic calming and 20 mph speed limits offers the best way forward for the continuing to reduce road casualties in the Borough.*

This Council:

- *Agrees that a report be compiled for the Executive Member for Regeneration on the effectiveness of the 20 mph zones already in place within the Borough and in particular the new Infirmary Signed Only area.*
- *This report should identify any lessons to be learned from those different areas.*
- *This report should also include proposals to prioritise further areas for 20 mph speed limits.*
- *This report should identify the best way restricted budgets could be used to expand the 20 mph limit areas.*

Following debate, Cllr Harling moved amended wording for the Motion as follows: on the third point, delete 'Signed Only' and insert 'Signed and traffic managed' and on the fourth bullet point from the bottom of the amendment add 'and traffic managed' after 'Signed Only'.

Councillor David Foster also moved amendment of the fourth bullet point from the bottom of the amendment deleting 'Executive Member for Regeneration' and add 'Executive Board'. This amendment was accepted by Councillor Harling.

The amended motion now read as follows:

This Council notes:

- *The success in bringing down road casualties in recent years in Blackburn with Darwen. However, much more must be done to reduce this figure further.*
- *The importance of reduced speed in reducing the risk for pedestrians and other road users.*
- *The progressive introduction of 20mph zones within Blackburn with Darwen over the last 14 years.*
- *Over 250 streets and roads are covered by existing 20 mph zones.*
- *That the Infirmary area is the first 20 mph Signed and traffic managed area in the Borough.*
- *Signed Only areas have signs and road markings but no physical traffic calming measures and are cheaper to install than traditional 20 mph zones.*
- *As Borough-wide Signed Only schemes are only in their infancy, research into their effectiveness is limited.*
- *The government's introduction of Signed Only areas has an expectation that they will be self-enforcing and not rely on the Police to provide additional enforcement.*

This Council believes:

- *That a diverse range of road safety campaigns, traffic calming and 20 mph speed limits offers the best way forward for the continuing to reduce road casualties in the Borough.*

This Council:

- *Agrees that a report be compiled for the Executive Board on the effectiveness of the 20 mph zones already in place within the Borough and in particular the new Infirmary Signed Only and traffic managed area.*
- *This report should identify any lessons to be learned from those different areas.*
- *This report should also include proposals to prioritise further areas for 20 mph speed limits.*
- *This report should identify the best way restricted budgets could be used to expand the 20 mph limit areas.*

There then followed a vote on the amended Motion.

RESOLVED – That the Motion as amended be carried.

MOTION 2

This Council expresses its grave concern about some of the proposals in the recently passed Health and Social Care Act and the negative impact that they are likely to have on a Borough like Blackburn with Darwen whose citizens already experience lower life expectancy than the average UK population.

There is no public appetite for another reorganisation of the NHS and, indeed, the Conservative and Liberal Democrat manifestoes for the 2010 General Election both ruled out a top-down reorganisation, yet that is exactly what the Coalition Government has now forced through Parliament. Billions of pounds are being spent on staff redundancies whilst a new and complex set of structures are put in place despite the opposition of virtually every professional body within the NHS. It is no great surprise that the general uncertainty caused by these unnecessary changes is manifesting itself in ever lengthening queues at Casualty where 4 hour waiting times are regularly exceeded and in the 18 week targets for operations now frequently being missed.

We expect all parties to agree that, in these tough financial times, the citizens of Blackburn with Darwen need money to be spent on improving health outcomes and not on an expensive bureaucratic reorganisation and we urge the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties in Council to make this point as forcefully as possible with their national party leaderships.

Proposed by
Councillor Phil Riley

Seconded by
Councillor Mohammed Khan

Members debated the Motion and the Motion was then put to the vote.

RESOLVED – That the Motion be carried.

92 Joint Minerals and Waste LDF – Proposed Major Modifications to Site Allocations and Development Management DPD

The Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Dave Harling advised that this item had been withdrawn, as the Inspector had advised LCC that they needed to go out for consultation on a model policy. An updated report on this item would therefore be submitted to a future meeting of the Council Forum.

93 The Mayoralty – 2012/13

A report was submitted containing recommendations relating to the Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2012/13.

Under the existing rotation of the nomination to the Office of Mayor it was the turn of the Labour Group to nominate the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2012/13.

In line with usual practice it was recommended that the serving Deputy Mayor, Councillor Zamir Khan be nominated to serve as Mayor in 2012/13.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That in line with the usual practice of the Deputy Mayor in the current year serving as Mayor the following year, Councillor Zamir Khan be nominated to serve as Mayor in 2012/13;
- 2) That the Labour Group be invited to nominate the Deputy Mayor for 2012/13; and
- 3) That the Leaders of Political Groups meet after the election in May to draw up a new agreement for 2013/14 onwards.

94 Report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Jim Shorrocks, presented his report on Scrutiny work undertaken since the last meeting of the Council Forum.

RESOLVED – That the report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

95 Reports of Executive Members with Portfolios

Council received and considered reports of the Leader and Executive Members with portfolios. These were considered as follows: The Leader, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Regeneration, Leisure and Culture, Housing, Resources, Environmental Improvement and Sustainability and Neighbourhoods and Customer Services,

The Executive Member for Children's Services, Councillor Maureen Bateson made reference to the impending retirement of Paula Kaniuk, Chief Executive of Nightsafe, and her hard work and dedication over many years service with the Borough, helping young homeless people, and requested that a letter be sent thanking her. The Mayor advised that she would write to Paula and invite her in to visit the Mayor.

RESOLVED – That the reports from the Leader, Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Regeneration, Leisure and Culture, Housing, Resources, Environmental Improvement and Sustainability and Neighbourhoods and Customer Services, be noted.

96 Questions Received from Members under Procedure Rule 11

The Chief Executive announced that four questions had been received under Procedure Rule 11 as follows:

1. *From Councillor David Foster to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Kate Hollern:*

Why was the decision to change the Chief Officer Structure taken on 20 January 2012 taken in secret with no prior notification to Councillors and why has that decision not been made public?

2. *From Councillor David Foster to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Kate Hollern:*

Why are the Agendas of the Chief Officer Employment Committee not made public like the Agendas for all other Council Meetings?

3. *From Councillor David Foster to the Executive Member for Environmental Improvement and Sustainability, Councillor Faryad Hussain:*

Why are people who walk into the Household Waste Disposal Site on Spring Vale road with items to dispose of being refused entry?

4. *From Councillor Colin Rigby to the Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Dave Harling and Councillor Jim Smith, Chair of the Planning Committee:*

Could the two Councillors confirm that both Regeneration and Planning are working urgently to produce a Policy with respect to wind turbines. In the North Turton with Tockholes ward there have been 3 turbines installed in the last 6 weeks, and 1 due for installation, with 4 applications pending. We urgently need such a Policy to both inform prospective applicants of the preferred sites for the installation of the turbines and their obligations to the communities which are affected by these sites.

Consideration should be given to the inclusion of a Section 106 charge regime, and rather than being a one of payment, this

could be viewed as an annual charge, either a flat fee, or as a percentage of the kilowatt hours generated.

Responses to the questions and supplementary questions arising were provided by the Leader and Councillors Hussain, Harling and Smith.

97 Questions submitted regarding the functions of the Police Authority

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received regarding the functions of the Police Authority.

98 Report for the Chair of the Police Authority

The Council Forum received a report from the Chair of the Police Authority.

RESOLVED – That the report of the Chair of Police Authority be noted.

Signed at a meeting of the Council
on the day of
(being the next ensuing meeting of the Council) by

MAYOR