

COUNCIL FORUM MEETING
Thursday 25th April 2013

PRESENT –*The Mayor Councillor Z. Khan (in the Chair), Councillors Akhtar, Bateson, Brookfield, Browne, Connor, Cottam, Daley, Davies, Desai, Entwistle, Evans, Foster D, Foster K, Gee, Groves, Hardman, Harling D, Hollern, Hollings P, Humphrys T, Hussain F., Hussain I., Hussain S, Jan-Virmani, Johnson, Kay, Khan M., Khonat H. Khonat S, Lee, Liddle, Maxfield, Mulla, Nuttall, O’Keeffe, Oldfield, Patel, Pearson D., Pearson J., Rehman, Rigby C., Rigby J., Riley, Shorrocks, Sidat, Slater Jacqueline, Slater John, Slater Julie, Smith D, Smith J, Solkar, Surve, Talbot, Tapp, Taylor B, Thayne, Walsh C., Walsh D., and Whalley.*

RESOLUTIONS

87. Notice Convening Meeting

The Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

88. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Hirst, Mahmood, McFall, and Wright.

89. Minutes of the Finance Council Meeting held on 4th March 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Finance Council meeting held on 4th March 2013 be approved as a correct record.

90. Declarations of interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

91. Mayoral Communications

The Mayor welcomed the Chief Executive and Councillors from Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council who were attending the meeting as observers.

The Mayor informed the Members that as he was approaching the end of his Mayoral year he was surprised at the number of engagements he had attended. He mentioned that the Mayors Ball had been a most enjoyable event with a good turnout, despite the economic climate, and thanked everybody for their attendance.

Reference was made to the St Georges Day events that had been held, specifically the service at Blackburn Cathedral, and the Mayor handed out red roses in the Town Hall square earlier in the week.

The Mayor advised that Blackburn College were celebrating their 125 anniversary, and that he had attended an event celebrating the College's success, and was attending a further event at the Beacon Centre the following Monday.

This being the last Council meeting of the year the Mayor wished to thank Members, colleagues and both Chief Executives who had supported him during his Mayoralty.

92. Council Forum

The Chief Executive advised that no questions from members of the public under Procedure Rule 10 had been received.

93. To consider motions submitted under Procedure Rule 12

The Chief Executive advised that one Notice of Motion had been submitted under Procedure Rule 12:

This Council is alarmed to hear that according to official Child and Maternal Health Data the borough is the worst area in England for children being killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

The Council calls upon the Executive Member for Regeneration to produce a report to the Executive Board as soon as possible on the reasons for this and what steps are being taken to improve the situation. It further requests that the report be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee as a matter of urgency.

Members debated the motion at some length.

The Executive Member for Regeneration; Councillor Dave Harling moved an amendment, namely;

- 1) Delete first paragraph and replace with:

The Council notes the progress made in recent years in reducing the number of children being killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in the borough and acknowledges that the number for 2012 is the lowest for at least a generation.

Recent Child and Maternal Health Data for 2012 are unadjusted figures for unitary councils only and conflicts data held by the Council.

- 2) In the second paragraph:

Delete Executive Board and replace with Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee.

Add "further" before the word "improve".

Delete "the situation" and replace with "road safety in the borough"

Delete the last sentence.

This now reads:

The Council calls upon the Executive Member for Regeneration to produce a report to the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible on the reasons for this and what steps are being taken to further improve road safety in the borough.

The amended motion now read as follows:

The Council notes the progress made in recent years in reducing the number of children being killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in the borough and acknowledges that the number for 2012 is the lowest for at least a generation.

Recent Child and Maternal Health Data for 2012 are unadjusted figures for unitary councils only and conflicts data held by the Council.

The Council calls upon the Executive Member for Regeneration to produce a report to the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible on the reasons for this and what steps are being taken to further improve road safety in the borough.

The amended Motion was seconded by Councillor Kay and subsequently debated.

Following debate on the amended Motion this was accepted by the Council.

There then followed a vote on the amended Motion which was carried.

RESOLVED –

That the Motion as amended be agreed.

94. The Mayoralty – 2013/14

A report was submitted containing recommendation relating to the Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2013/14.

Under the existing rotation of the nomination to the Office of Mayor it was the turn of the Labour Group to nominate the Mayor for 2013/14, and the Conservative Group to nominate the Deputy Mayor for 2013/14.

In line with usual practice it was recommended that the serving Deputy Mayor, Councillor Salim Mulla be nominated to serve as Mayor 2013/14 and Councillor Alan Cottam was nominated to serve as Deputy Mayor in 2013/14.

RESOLVED -

1. That in line with the usual practice of the Deputy Mayor in current year serving as Mayor the following year, Councillor Salim Mulla be nominated to serve as Mayor in 2013/14;

2. That the Conservative Group nomination of Councillor Alan Cottam as the Deputy Mayor for 2013/14 be agreed; and
3. That the Leaders' of Political Groups meet during the 2013/14 Municipal Year to draw up a new agreement for 2015/16 onwards, commencing with Labour Mayors for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

95. Policy and Corporate Resources Committee

The Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee presented an update report on the work of the Committee. The Chair also updated Council that the Annual Review of Scrutiny was going to take place on the 30th April and that all Members were invited to participate.

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

96. Reports of Executive Members with Portfolios

Council Forum received and considered reports of the Leader and Executive Members with portfolios. These were considered as follows: The Leader, Leisure Culture and Young People, Neighbourhoods Housing and Customer Services, Regeneration, Resources, Schools and Education, Health and Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Environment.

Members mentioned the new advice services to be jointly delivered at the Library, the “winter grit squad”, changes in planning legislation and the public consultation events on the Local Plan. Thanks were given to the “winter grit squad”, and further thanks were made for recent fly tipping prosecutions. Congratulations were made on the recent awards to Darwen Vale and St Silas schools.

The Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care advised Council that on the previous day Healthwatch had been formally launched which would demonstrate tangible outcomes in delivering Public Health as an integrated Council function. The Executive Member raised concerns over the amount of finances being cut from the Councils budgets and the subsequent negative effects this would have on poorer health outcomes for residents. Expanding on health outcomes he mentioned that tobacco and its linkages to coronary disease, COPD, strokes and premature death was a real priority for him. He advised Council that he hoped the Council would be able to demonstrate leadership for its diverse communities, explaining that in BME areas, that although some people did not smoke, Shisha was a further related problem. He advised Council that there was a need to work together to address tobacco, drugs and alcohol and obesity. Members congratulated the Director of Public Health for the department's smooth transition back to the Council.

Councillor Shaukhat Hussain moved a Motion without Notice:

"That this council resolves to write to the department of Health to urge them to update the necessary legislation and takes steps to stem the growth of Shisha bars that do not comply with the Smoking Ban legislation of 2007. Current legislation does not act as a sufficient financial deterrent and a number of Shisha Bars frequented by the residents in Blackburn with Darwen flout the small penalties imposed on them and continue to operate in an illegal manner. This Council is also concerned that Shisha smoking has a detrimental impact on the health of those young residents of Blackburn with Darwen who undertake this activity and, in addition, that there are potential safeguarding issues caused by the unregulated nature of some Shisha bars."

Members debated the motion, and were unanimous in their support for the motion when it was voted upon and agreed.

Finally, the Executive Member for Children's Services wished to place a record her congratulations to Lauren Berry as runner up in Young Citizen of the Year, and congratulations also to Jess Slater in her election as Deputy Youth MP. She also wished to record her thanks to the staff in the department for an outstanding Fostering report.

RESOLVED –

1. That the reports from the Leader and the Executive Members for Leisure Culture and Young People, Neighbourhoods Housing and Customer Services, Regeneration, Resources, Schools and Education, Health and Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Environment be noted; and
2. That the Motion without Notice as above be agreed.

97. To consider any questions received from Members under Procedure Rule 11

The Chief Executive announced that no questions had been received from Members under Procedure Rule 11.

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

MAYOR