



ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 9th May, 2013

PRESENT – *The Mayor Councillor Zamir Khan (in the Chair), Councillors Akhtar, Bateson, Browne, Connor, Cottam, Daley, Davies Desai, Entwistle, Evans, Foster D., Foster K., Gee, Groves, Hardman, Harling, Hollern, Hollings, Humphrys, Hussain F., Hussain I., Hussain S Jan-Virmani, Johnson, Kay, Khan M., Khonat S., Lee, Liddle, Mahmood, McFall, Mulla, Nuttall, O’Keeffe, Oldfield, Patel, Pearson D, Pearson J., Rehman, Rigby C., Riley, Shorrocks, Sidat, Slater Jacqueline, Slater John, Slater Julie, Smith D., Smith, James, Solkar, Surve, Talbot, Tapp, Taylor, Thayne, Walsh C, Walsh D, and Whalley.*

RESOLUTIONS

1 Notice Convening Meeting

The Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Brookfield, Hirst, Khonat H., Maxfield, Rigby J. and Wright.

3 Election of the Mayor for 2013/2014

The Chief Executive asked for nominations for the Office of Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing Council year. Councillor Salim Mulla was nominated for office and declared elected as the Mayor of the Borough for the 2013/2014 Municipal Year.

The newly elected Mayor then assumed the robe and chain of office, made and subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the chair.

4 Election of the Deputy Mayor for 2013/2014

The Chief Executive asked for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the 2013/14 Council year. Councillor Alan Cottam was nominated for office and the Mayor declared him elected as Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the 2013/2014 Municipal Year.

The newly elected Deputy Mayor then received his chain of office and made and subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

5 Tribute to the Newly Elected Mayor

Councillors Phil Riley and Colin Rigby paid tribute to the newly elected Mayor. The Mayor responded and returned thanks for his election.

6 Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor and Consort

Councillors Kate Hollern and Mohammed Khan paid tribute to the retiring Mayor and Mayoresses, for the dedicated work they had undertaken during their term of office, making reference to the engagements they had attended and activities undertaken in support of the Mayor's chosen charities for the year.

The Mayor, Councillor Salim Mulla, presented badges to Councillor Zamir Khan, Mrs. Rabat Khan, Mrs. Nahila Khan, Miss Bushra Khan and Miss Sonia Khan. Councillor Zamir Khan responded to the tributes received and reflected on the key events of the Mayoral year.

At this point there was a short recess to allow the Mayor and guests to leave the meeting.

(The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Alan Cottam, in the Chair.)

7 Minutes of the last Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting of the Council Forum held on 25th April 2013 be approved as a correct record.

8 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

9 Council Appointments for 2013/2014

The Chief Executive referred to his report on the allocation of seats and appointments to Council positions for 2013/2014.

A list of the Executive Members and Lead Members was circulated.

RESOLVED –

1. That Council notes the Shadow Portfolio Members;
2. That appointments be made to the positions detailed in Paragraph subsection 2;
3. That Council note the eligibility of Lead Members and the provisions relating to political balance, referred to in Paragraph 3; and

4. That decisions on the remaining appointments of Members of Committees be delegated to Group Leaders to agree the appointments.

10 Appointments to Groups and Panels for 2013/2014

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the appointment of Members to Groups and Panels for 2013/2014.

RESOLVED –

1. That decisions on the appointments of fifteen Members to serve on the panel of Members to deal with appeals as set out in paragraph 2.1 be delegated to the Group Leaders to agree the appointments;
2. That approval be given to the membership of the Chief Executive's Employment Committee and Chief Officers' Employment Committee, as set out in paragraph 2.2; and
3. That decisions on the appointment/reappointment of 6 members to the Charitable Funds Committee, as set out in paragraph 2.3, be delegated to Group Leaders to agree the appointments.

11 Appointments to Various Combined Authorities, Outside Bodies, Community Associations and Partnership Bodies

The Chief Executive submitted a report on appointments to Combined Authorities, Outside Bodies, Community Associations and Partnership Bodies.

The report advised that nominations to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority would need to be agreed so that appointments could be affected by the Clerk to the Authority as soon as possible. Councillor Michael Lee advised that the Conservative nomination would be Councillor Jean Rigby.

RESOLVED – That appointments to the list of representatives on combined authorities, outside bodies, community associations and partnership bodies be delegated to Group Leaders for decision.

12 Annual Review of Scrutiny 2012/13

Following the Annual Review of Scrutiny meeting held on 30th April 2013, a report was submitted which proposed changes for agreement by Annual Council to improve the Overview and Scrutiny process for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council that would better reflect the

changing times for Local Government, taking account of current legislation and guidance.

At the Annual review of Scrutiny on 30th April 2013, several issues were raised with and by Members. The meeting was attended by 26 Members, who actively engaged in the session giving views and opinions on both the preceding year and suggestions for improvement for the forthcoming municipal year. Some of the highlights from the meeting were outlined in the report submitted.

The report contained a number of recommendations relating to the Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Corporate Parenting Committee, and the Member Engagement Advisory Committee.

The recommendations took account of legislative changes such as Public Health returning as a Council function and also would allow for more realistic and manageable work programmes to be delivered.

Subject to agreement, the revised Overview and Scrutiny structure would be:

- Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Health and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Each of these Committees would then have 11 Members as opposed to 17 and this would address the issue of Members being requested to participate with several Committees. Additionally, the Corporate Parenting Committee would become a Specialist Advisory Committee, and Member Engagement would be carried out via the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In terms of pre-decision scrutiny, to build on the current strengths of pre-decision scrutiny it was suggested that each Executive Member could request their respective Committee to look comprehensively at one or two pre-decisions or policies (from a shortlist) they were considering implementing in the next 12 – 24 months, outlining to the Committee a timeframe in which a report and recommendations would be required as part of the work programme.

Councillor Michael Lee moved an additional recommendation as follows:

We ask the Chief Executive Officer in conjunction with the Scrutiny team to investigate different methods of scrutiny used in other boroughs, with a view to bringing a report to Policy and Review Committee on 26th June 2013 for a reference to Council on 27th June 2013 on how we can ensure the pre-determination scrutiny becomes the norm.

Following a debate, the Council Forum moved to a vote on the proposed additional recommendation, which was lost.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the current Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure be revised to the following:
 - Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Health and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 2) That the current Member Engagement Advisory Committee becomes a Member-led activity group reporting to the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 3) That the current Corporate Parenting Committee become a Specialist Advisory Group working closely with the Executive Member for children's Services and the Chair of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 4) That (in order to further strengthen corporate parenting) challenge questions and outcomes be built into the decision making process used by all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees when choosing the work programme;
- 5) That the Children element of Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be revised to become Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Portfolios accountable to this Committee would be Executive Member for Children's Services, Executive Member for Schools and Education and the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Young People (specifically young people's issues); and
- 6) That the Councillor membership of each Committee be reduced from 17 to 11 in order to support the increased and conflicting demands on Members' availability.



13 Independent Remuneration Panel and Members' Allowances
2013/14

Members received a report which asked the Council to consider recommendations relating to the Independent Remuneration Panel and Members' Allowances Scheme for 2013/14.

The report advised that in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council must refresh and adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme with monthly payments made to Councillors at least every three years.

The last review by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Independent Remuneration Panel to Council Forum was 1st February 2010 and therefore the Members' Allowance Scheme for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council needed refreshing.

It had been several years since the Independent Remuneration Panel had been recruited to and refreshed. Accordingly Council were asked to agree that recruitment to a refreshed panel was done as soon as possible, (with an invite to existing members to reapply should they wish to continue).

Should Council agree to recruit and refresh to a new Panel, in the meantime the existing scheme would remain in operation in the absence of any review having taken place. In order to pro-actively address this, it was suggested that whilst advertising to refresh a new Independent Remuneration Panel took place, Group Leaders agreed a series of suggested revisions and improvements to the existing scheme for review by the new Panel. This would give the new Panel a framework on which to base some recommendations to Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Kate Hollern, advised Members that the review of Members' Allowances intended to look at removal of additional allowances that had been introduced before Labour took control in 2010, a number of amendments to the current scheme, making the rules for Chairs more clearly understandable, caps to mobile telephone bills, increasing the number of lead members with no additional costs, stopping the payments of multiple allowances, and reductions to the number of Opposition Deputy Leader payments made. A debate followed on these proposals.

Finally, the Leader moved a change to recommendation 1 – remove "Council" and insert "the Chief Executive".

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Chief Executive advertise to refresh and recruit to a new Independent Remuneration Panel for 2013 onwards;
- 2) That Group Leaders agree a series of suggested revisions and improvements to the existing scheme for submission to a refreshed Independent Remuneration Panel for their opinion and consideration; and
- 3) That the Independent Remuneration Panel provide Council with a report detailing their recommendations to the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2013/14 as soon as possible.

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

MAYOR