

COUNCIL FORUM MEETING
Thursday 6th November 2014

PRESENT – *The Mayor Councillor A. Cottam (in the Chair), Councillors Akhtar H., Akhtar P., Ali, Bateson, Brookfield, Browne, Casey, Davies, Desai, Entwistle, Evans, Foster D., Gee, Groves, Gunn, Hardman, Harling, Hollern, Hollings, Humphrys, Hussain F., Hussain I., Hussain S., Johnson, Jan-Virmani, Kay, Khan M., Khan Z., Lee, Liddle, Mahmood, McFall, McKinlay, Mulla, Nuttall, Patel, Pearson, Rehman, Rigby C., Riley, Roberts, Shorrock, Sidat, Slater Jacqueline, Slater John, Slater Julie, Smith D., Smith J., Surve, Talbot, Taylor, Whalley, Whittle and Wright.*

RESOLUTIONS

35 Notice Convening Meeting

The Chief Executive read out the notice convening the meeting.

36 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Khonat H., Khonat S., Connor, Daley, Foster K., Maxfield, O’Keeffe, Rigby J., and Walsh.

37 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:-

Councillor Ron Whittle – (Agenda Item 12.3 – Neighbourhoods Housing and Customer Service Portfolio Update) Re Twin Valley Homes employed by Housing Association in same Company Group as Twin Valley Homes, although no knowledge or involvement in this project.

Councillor Ron Whittle declared a second interest on (Agenda Item 12.1 – Leader Portfolio Update) Re Alley Gate as he works for a company in the same group who maintain the Council’s Alley Gates.

38 Mayoral Communications

The Mayor, Councillor Alan Cottam, updated Members on a number of events that he had recently attended, which included him giving a speech at Longshaw School about aspirations. He reported that he was pleased to receive a letter back from each child at Longshaw School, outlining their aspirations for their future. The Mayor attended outside of the Borough a Remembrance event in relation to the Duke of Lancaster Regiment in Warrington as well as a visit to Manchester for an event relating to Chinese Independence Day.

39 Council Forum

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

40 Motions submitted under Procedure Rule 12

The Chief Executive advised that no Notices of Motion had been submitted under Procedure Rule 12.

Councillor Roberts requested a change in the order of business, to receive agenda item 12.5 before item 12.1 (Minute No.44), as he intended to raise a Motion without Notice under Procedure Rule 13 (d).

41 Statement of Licensing Policy for the Licensing Act 2003

A report was submitted which sought the approval of Council to adopt a revised Statement of Licensing Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003. It was proposed that the Statement of Licensing Policy be adopted as the Council's policy with respect to its duties under that Licensing Act 2003.

RESOLVED – That Council Approve the adoption of the 2014 version of the Statement of Licensing Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003.

42 Treasury Management Outturn 2013-24 and mid-year strategy review 2014-15

Members were advised of Treasury Management performance for 2013-14 and the position to date in 2014- 15.

Council Forum was reminded that the CIPFA Treasury Management code required the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy (including various Treasury Management indicators) before the start of each financial year and to consider both the outturn after each year end, and the mid-year position in each current year. The Council had determined to combine the outturn and mid-year review into a single report.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That Council note the Outturn position for 2013-14; and
- 2) That Council agree the proposed changes to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2014-15, to allow a higher level of Non-Specified short term investments in UK banks, and to add a new category of Approved Investment Counterparty, for Banks and other organisations/securities holding long-term credit ratings no lower than BBB+.

43 Policy and Corporate Resources Committee

The Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee presented an update to his report on the work of all the Scrutiny Committees and made specific reference to work on a further licensing objective, child exploitation and alley gates.

It was reported that recommendations from each Committee had been agreed and that attendance at Committees and Task Groups had been very good.

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

44 Reports of Executive Members with Portfolios

Council Forum received and considered reports from the Leader and Executive Member with Portfolios. These were considered as follows:

Resources portfolio, the Leader, Environment, Leisure, Culture and Young People, Neighbourhoods, Housing and Customer Services, Regeneration, Schools and Education, Health and Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

Councillor John Roberts proposed to Council a Motion without Notice under Procedure Rule 13 (d):

This Council condemns the Government's decision to send misleading tax summaries this week to every household in the country.

Produced by Chancellor George Osborne, it is a cynical public funded exercise on behalf of the Tory Party as part of their campaigning for the forthcoming General Election.

Costing £5 million to print and distribute, it presents Party Political Propaganda as neutral information. It also fails to include indirect taxation such as VAT, fuel and alcohol duty that over recent years have increasingly driven up the cost of living for hard working families.

The Council Leader is asked to write to Mr Osborne and register our opposition to what is an expensive and wasteful exercise aimed at justifying more welfare reform, cuts and austerity measures in the future that are so damaging in areas like ours and is a blatant misuse of his position as Chancellor"

Proposer: Councillor John Roberts

Seconder: Councillor Phil Riley

Councillor David Foster moved an amendment to the Motion:

“This Council supports tax payers being given a summary breakdown of the Governments income and expenditure, to be drawn up by the Office of Budget Responsibility”.

The proposed amendment to the Motion was seconded by Councillor Browne.

Following debate on the proposed amendment, Councillor Roberts advised that he was happy to accept the amendment, as an addition to his original motion and there followed a vote on the amendment.

The amendment was carried.

There then followed a vote on the Substantive Motion which now read as follows;

This Council condemns the Government's decision to send misleading tax summaries this week to every household in the country.

Produced by Chancellor George Osborne, it is a cynical public funded exercise on behalf of the Tory Party as part of their campaigning for the forthcoming General Election.

Costing £5 million to print and distribute, it presents Party Political Propaganda as neutral information. It also fails to include indirect taxation such as VAT, fuel and alcohol duty that over recent years have increasingly driven up the cost of living for hard working families.

The Council Leader is asked to write to Mr Osborne and register our opposition to what is an expensive and wasteful exercise aimed at justifying more welfare reform, cuts and austerity measures in the future that are so damaging in areas like ours and is a blatant misuse of his position as Chancellor.

This Council supports tax payers being given a summary breakdown of the Governments income and expenditure, to be drawn up by the Office of Budget Responsibility.

The vote was carried.

In moving her report, the Leader of the Council updated Members on Alleygates and Business engagement. The Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Young People paid tribute to the work and professionalism of King Georges Hall staff and noted increased attendances at recent events. Reference was also made to pantomime bookings outselling previous years.

In addition to moving his report, the Executive Member for Schools and Education reported to Members that on-line school admission applications had seen a significant increase on previous years.

In moving her report, the Executive Member for Regeneration updated Members on traffic lights on Blackburn road and made reference to the Christmas light switch on which would be held on the 20th November and not the 20th December as stated in her report.

The Executive Member for Children's Services received commendations from other Members on the success on the Child adoption teams' excellent work, which the Lead Member Councillor Pat McFall received. A response to a question on the success rates of keeping adoption siblings together would be provided.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the motion be carried as amended; and
- 2) That the reports from the Leader and Executive Members for Environment, Leisure, Culture and Young People, Neighbourhoods, Housing and Customer Services, Regeneration, Resources, Schools and Education, Health and Adult Social Care and Children's Services be noted.

45 Draft Year Planner 2015-2016

Members were asked to note the draft year planner 2015-2016 ahead of submission to Policy Council to be held on the 4th December 2014.

RESOLVED – That the Year Planner be noted and submitted to Policy Council on the 4th December for final ratification.

45 To Consider any questions received from Members under Procedure Rule 11

The Chief Executive announced that one question had been received under Procedure Rule 11 as follows:

Question from Councillor Paul Browne to the Leader of the Council:

"Did the Leader agree with the Police Crime Commissioner decision to axe his deputy and chief officers to save money?"

A response to the question was provided by the Leader of the Council.

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

MAYOR