

# POLICY COUNCIL

## Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021

**PRESENT** – *The Mayor Councillor Derek Hardman, Councillors, Akhtar P, Baldwin, Bateson, Casey, Fazal, Floyd, Gee, Gunn, Harling, Humphrys, Hussain I, Hussain M, Hussain S, Irfan, Khan M, Khan Z, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood, Marrow, McFall, McGurk, Oates, Patel Ab, Patel Alt, Rawat, Rigby, Riley, Russell, Salton, Sidat, Shorrocks, Slater Jacq, Slater Jo, Slater Ju, Slater N, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, Taylor, Walker and Whittle.*

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **35 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chief Executive read out the notice convening the meeting.

There then followed Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain.

Apologies were received from Councillors Desai M, Desai S, Connor, Fielding, Brookfield, Akhtar, Jan-Virmani, and Browne.

#### **36 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

Councillor Neil Slater made reference to Minute Number 32, stating that a 'red flag' planning application had not been submitted to Planning and Highways Committee, contrary to discussions at the October Council Forum.

Councillors Phil Riley and Dave Smith responded, with Councillor Smith advising that he had not been contacted about the planning application in question, and had a request been made the matter would have been submitted to the Planning and Highways Committee. Cllr Smith requested that Councillor Slater contact him about this matter after the meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be agreed as a correct record

#### **37 Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

#### **38 Civic Service Award**

The Mayor presented former Councillor Colin Rigby OBE with the Civic Service Award.

The Mayor, Leader and Leader of the Conservative Group all paid tribute to the outstanding contribution made by Colin Rigby over his 30 years on the Council.

Colin responded and thanked Councillors and Officers for their support over the years.

The Leader and Councillor Vicky McGurk made reference to former Councillor Andy Kay, who had respectfully declined to accept the Civic Service Award, with both paying tribute to his significant contribution to the Council over 40 years plus service, and Councillor McGurk read out a message from Andy to the Council.

### **39 Delivering through the Covid-19 Pandemic and looking towards the future**

Members received a report, a presentation by the Leader and Chief Executive and a video, which outlined the key national and local policy challenges and proposals, which reflected on the Council's performance over the year, and provided a look ahead to the next year, together with a request for endorsement of the City status bid for Blackburn, and which provided an update on plans for a Covid-19 memorial for the Borough.

The Leader made reference to the immense challenges faced by the Borough over the past two years and of the huge impact of Covid-19 on residents, businesses and partners. Councillor Khan thanked all for their response and resilience.

Key national policy drivers included the Levelling Up agenda, and the forthcoming White Paper, the Adult Social Care White Paper, County Deal programme and Climate Change.

The Chief Executive reported on the Council's performance in terms of Key Performance Indicators linked to the Council's eight strategic priorities and gave key details in terms of PEOPLE, PLACE, ECONOMY and COUNCIL.

Members were also advised of plans for a Covid-19 Memorial in the Borough and plans for engagement with the public.

As part of a national competition to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, the Council intended to bid for City Status for Blackburn, and Members were advised of the process and plans for engagement, and of the benefits a successful bid would bring to the Borough as a whole.

The Corporate Plan would be refreshed, and following extensive engagement it was planned that this would be submitted to the Council in the summer of 2022.

Reference was made to the Climate Change Action Plan, and an update on this plan would be submitted to the next Executive Board meeting. Other key strategies included a renewal of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Communications and Engagement Strategy.

Members then debated the report, presentation and video.

**RESOLVED** – That Policy Council:

- Note the report

- Note the performance of the Council for the first six months of 2021/22 (1 April to 30 September 2021)
- Note the plans for engagement over the next six months
- Endorse the submission of the bid for City Status for Blackburn on December 8
- Note plans for a Covid-19 memorial for the Borough

#### **40 Year Planner 2022/23**

The draft Year Planner 2022/23 was submitted, ahead of submission of the final version to the Council Forum Meeting in January 2022 for approval.

**RESOLVED** – That the draft Year Planner 2022/23 be noted.

At this point of the meeting, the Leader, Councillor Mohammed Khan announced that he would not be standing for re-election in May 2022, and therefore after that time the Council would need to elect a new Leader.

Councillor Khan referred to some key recent achievements and also some of the challenges that he would be continuing to address over the next six months or so.

Councillors Phil Riley and John Slater paid tribute to Councillor Khan and observed that there would be more opportunities to pay full tribute to Councillor Khan's outstanding contribution.

In closing the meeting, the Mayor commented that hoped that everyone would have a happy Christmas and a fantastic 2022.

Signed at a meeting of the Council Forum on

On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022

(being the ensuing meeting on the Council) by

MAYOR