

COUNCILLOR BARBARA ASHWORTH, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 23rd December 2019

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Ashworth (in the Chair)
Councillors Adshead, Aldred, A. Barnes, Brennan, Bromley, Cheetham, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Essex (in part), Fletcher, Gill, Haslam-Jones, Haworth, Hughes, Johnson, Kempson, Kenyon, Kostyan, Lythgoe, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Oakes, Pendlebury, Powell, Procter, Serridge, Steen, Stevens and Walmsley.

IN ATTENDANCE: Clare Birtwistle, Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)
Phil Seddon, Head of Finance (S151 Officer)
Mike Atherton, Planning Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
Yasmin Ahmed, Legal Services Officer
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO PRESENT: 1 press
53 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors L.Barnes and Farrington.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2019 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

4. Declarations of Interest

- Councillor Neal declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute 6 owing to his membership of LALC.
- Councillor Marriott declared a pecuniary interest in minute 6 owing to a land/property interest and he left the room and did not vote on this item.

5. Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service.

The Leader of the Council informed that Councillor Adshead would become the Council's Climate Change Champion.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

N.B. Councillor Marriott left the meeting for the following item.

6. **Rossendale Local Plan – Examination in Public Update and requirement to allocate a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site**

The Council considered the Rossendale Local Plan report, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Operations and Development Control. A revised recommendation at 1.4 was moved and seconded. If the recommendations in the report were approved it would start a 6 week consultation process in January. If a site was not allocated it would put the Local Plan at risk.

In response to comments and questions from members the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder informed that:

- There had been a cross party working group looking at the Local Plan.
- The allocation of a site was being done at the request of the government Inspector as there was an identified significant need which needs addressing.
- The costs at recommendation 1.4 were to cover work requested by the Inspector and a full cost breakdown would be circulated to members.
- The proposed site was not one of the Council's priorities.
- The Inspector had instructed there was a requirement and significant need for a transit site for Rossendale, therefore what other authorities were doing was irrelevant.
- There was current activity on the Futures Park site and numerous schemes were coming forward to take up the other plots.

The Planning Manager informed that the owner of the proposed land at Sharneyford had not responded to requests to make contact with the Council. In relation to the Futures Park site, this had been allocated as land for employment use within the Local Plan as part of the inspection and was no longer available for other uses. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that specialist external legal advice had been sought in relation to the lease of the land at Futures Park and this had confirmed that the lease was fully enforceable.

Councillors Essex, James Eaton, Haworth and Steen requested a recorded vote. Voting took place as follows:

| Name | Vote |
|------------------|-------------|
| Cllr Adshead | For |
| Cllr Aldred | For |
| Cllr Ashworth | For |
| Cllr A. Barnes | For |
| Cllr Brennan | For |
| Cllr Bromley | For |
| Cllr Cheetham | Against |
| Cllr James Eaton | Against |
| Cllr Janet Eaton | Against |

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Cllr Essex | Against |
| Cllr Fletcher | For |
| Cllr Gill | For |
| Cllr Haslam-Jones | Abstain |
| Cllr Haworth | Against |
| Cllr Hughes | For |
| Cllr Johnson | For |
| Cllr Kempson | Against |
| Cllr Kenyon | For |
| Cllr Kostyan | Against |
| Cllr Lythgoe | For |
| Cllr Morris | Against |
| Cllr Neal | For |
| Cllr Oakes | For |
| Cllr Pendlebury | Against |
| Cllr Powell | For |
| Cllr Procter | For |
| Cllr Serridge | For |
| Cllr Steen | Against |
| Cllr Stevens | For |
| Cllr Walmsley | Against |
| For: | 18 |
| Against: | 11 |
| Abstentions: | 1 |

Resolved:

1. To note the Update and the Council’s further Actions following the Local Plan Hearings.
2. That Council approve the revised Local Development Scheme, to be effective from 24 December 2019, which sets out an amended timetable for the emerging Local Plan, with minor amendments delegated to the Portfolio Holder and the Director of Economic Development.
3. That Council approve the proposed Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site allocation for a six week period of consultation as part of the emerging Rossendale Local Plan (2019 to 2034).
4. Members approve the allocation of £125k from the Employment and Transport Reserve in order to fund the additional works required by the Local Plan Examination.

Reason for Decision

To note the additional work in order to proceed with the examination of the Rossendale Local Plan (2019 to 2034) and update the Local Development Scheme to take account of timetable changes. To allocate a Gypsy Transit Site and commence consultation.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

N.B. Councillor Marriott returned to the meeting and Councillor Essex left the meeting for the remaining items.

7. Local Council Tax Support Scheme

The Council considered the Local Council Tax Support Scheme report, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Customers.

Resolved:

Full Council approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21 as set out in this report.

Reason for Decision

To retain the existing unchanged scheme of council tax support, with the exception of any inflationary upgrades to national benefit entitlements.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

8. Public Meeting Schedule

The Council considered the Public Meeting Schedule report.

Resolved:

That members agree the Public Meeting Schedule containing dates of public meetings for 2020/2021 as detailed at Appendix 1.

Reason for Decision

To agree a committee schedule in order to ensure that the Council can effectively conduct its business.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

9. Bacup Town Centre, 2040 Vision, Masterplan and external funding update

The Council considered the Bacup Town Centre update.

In response to a question from a member, the Head of Finance (S151 Officer) confirmed that in relation to recommendation 1.3, this was a request in principle and that 6.1 of the report identified that any borrowing would have to be backed by a robust business case.

In response to additional comments and questions from members the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development and Leader of the Council informed that:

- The report aimed to support the submission detailed at 1.3 and also to enable the best possible bid for the development of Bacup.
- Only certain towns would get this funding and it depended on the success of the bid.

The Leader of the Council thanked officers and members for the tremendous amount of work undertaken so far.

Resolved:

1. To note the report and progress on the Bacup 2040 project.
2. To approve the Bacup 2040 Vision and Masterplan as Council policy for the long-term regeneration of the town centre; as well as adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Plan. Future refreshes of the document to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
3. To authorise the submission of a Future High Streets stage 2 submission, content to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder. To authorise in principle only, match funding of up to £5 million from the Council to support the redevelopment of the Market Square and town centre regeneration subject to further business case, financial testing, central government expectations and future Council approval.
4. To note the submission of the stage 2 High Street Heritage Action Zone bid for circa £1.1 million and allocate £87,500 from the employment and transport reserve as Council match funding to support the creation of a project officer for the length of the project. To authorise the Monitoring Officer to enter into a grant funding agreement should the stage 2 application be successful.
5. Council authorises the creation of a Bacup High Street Heritage Action Zone Board and sub-groups to sit underneath the strategic Bacup 2040 Board. Council delegates all spending and delivery decisions circa £1.1m to the Bacup High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Board; terms of reference to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Reason for Decision

The Bacup 2040 Vision, Masterplan and funding bids will bring transformational change to Bacup town centre and deliver a modern vibrant offer to visitors and businesses.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

10. Haslingden Town Centre, 2040 Vision, Masterplan and external funding update

The Council considered the Haslingden Town Centre update which was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

In response to comments and questions from members the Leader of the Council informed that:

- It was had been difficult to do this level of work with so many town centres to work on, but the Council was now in a better position to do this and there was still lots to do.

The Leader of the Council thanked everyone who had been involved in the process and success of the bid.

Resolved:

1. Council notes the results of the Haslingden 2040 consultation, draft Vision and Masterplan.

2. Council authorises full consultation on the Vision and Masterplan with the view of adopting them as official Council policy both for regeneration policy in the town centre and as a supplementary planning document.
3. Council notes the successful award of the stage 1 National Lottery Heritage Fund bid for Haslingden.

Reason for Decision

To work towards adopting the Haslingden Vision and Masterplan as official Council policy both for regeneration policy in the town centre and as a supplementary planning document. The regeneration of Haslingden Town Centre is identified both as a Corporate Project within the refreshed 2018 Corporate Strategy and within the three year action plan of the adopted 2018 Economic Development Strategy.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

11. Urgent Decisions

The Mayor reported that the Cabinet had not taken any urgent decisions since the last meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

12. Recommendation of the Appointments and Appeals Committee

The Council considered the recommendation on the appointment of the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and interim arrangements.

Councillor Neal and the Leader of the Council thanked Phil Seddon, Head of Finance and S151 Officer for his hard work and 17 years' service with the Council and wished him well for the future. They also thanked Janice Crawford, Finance Manager, for her hard work and service with the Council. As the final chair of former Rosso, Councillor Oakes also thanked Phil Seddon for his loyalty and work with the company and wished him well.

Resolved:

1. That Karen Spencer is appointed Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer), subject to HR policies, references and clearances being completed.
2. That Ken Masser is appointed as the Temporary Section 151 Officer until the commencement of the above appointment.

Reason for Decision

To ratify the appointment of the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and agree interim arrangements.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

(The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and concluded at 8.35pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date