

COUNCILLOR BARBARA ASHWORTH, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 27th January 2020

**PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Ashworth (in the Chair)
Councillors Aldred, Brennan, Cheetham, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Fletcher, Haslam-Jones, Haworth, Hughes, Johnson, Kempson, Kenyon, Lythgoe, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Oakes, Procter, Roberts, Serridge, Steen, Stevens and Walmsley.**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Neil Shaw, Chief Executive
Clare Birtwistle, Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)
Cath Burns, Director of Economic Development
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
John Illingworth, Mayor's Attendant**

ALSO PRESENT: 12 members of the public

A short silence was held as a mark of respect for former councillor Pam McManus.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Adshead, A.Barnes, L. Barnes, Bromley, Essex, Farrington, Gill, Kostyan, Pendlebury and Stansfield.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd December 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

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Deputy Leader of the Council informed that the Council had saved £200,000 per year bringing back the Revenues and Benefits ICT systems to Rossendale Borough Council. The system went live the first week in December 2019.

The upgrade of the CCTV system across the Borough had been completed with new cameras linked to the CCTV Hub at Blackburn with 24/7 monitoring facilities. The cameras were focussed on the town centres of Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Bacup.

A new Private Sector Housing Officer, Dan King, had started in November. Seven empty dwellings that he had been involved in through his casework were now back in use. Of these seven dwellings, five had been empty for over two years.

The Communities Team had supported and organised various successful Christmas markets and events including the Rawtenstall Christmas Lights Switch On, which saw 1000 people parade along Bank St led by Rossendale Drum Majorettes and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress. The Deputy Leader thanked all those involved.

In response to a question from a member, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Customers confirmed that there was the ability to monitor 24/7 from the Blackburn hub.

ROLL OF HONOUR

6. Roll of Honour

The Mayor commended Ms Anita Farrow for her service to the borough and communities of Rossendale. Ms Farrow had spent over 35 years as one of the driving forces within Whitworth Horticultural Society in a number of roles. She had also contributed to other environment improvements such as at the Memorial Gardens in Whitworth, along with members of Whitworth in Bloom and the Horticultural Society. The Mayor noted that people of Rossendale should rightfully be very proud of her.

Councillor Neal detailed his reasons for nominating Ms Farrow and for her outstanding work across the borough as a whole.

Ms Farrow thanked Councillor Neal for the nomination, gave an overview of her work over the last 35 years and thanked the other volunteers, some of who had attended the meeting.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

7. Futures Park Update and Plot Development

The Council considered the Futures Park Update and Plot Development report.

In response to a member's question, the Monitoring Officer and Director of Economic Development confirmed that 5.6 of the report informed that:

- It was an agreement to lease that was in place.
- The designation of the site referred to in the Local Plan.
- Expert legal advice had been taken and the Council was comfortable with the lease arrangements.

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

- Changes to the traffic flow would be part of the planning process.
- The risk assessment detailed the risk implications and mitigation.
- Due diligence had been done and members could be reassured it was being dealt with properly.

- Cabinet were heavily involved in the project and a report would come back to Council for further support of the next stage.

Resolved:

1. Members note the update to bring forward Bacup’s key flagship leisure and employment site at Futures Park; the progress at Plot 5, and the grant offer of £1.525m from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Deal to support both Plots 1 and 5 and road infrastructure improvements.
2. Members note the advanced enquiry from an expanding nursery school and agree to explore a detailed business case for investment at Plot 1 Futures Park, along with the necessary infrastructure improvements; with a further update to be made to full Council for an approval to proceed.
3. Members approve a development fund of £75,000, as detailed in paragraph 5.12, to be forward funded from the Employment & Transport Reserve; of which circa £50,000 will be indemnified by the nursery school.
4. Following a formal grant offer letter and scrutiny of associated conditions, Members agree to delegate the acceptance of the £1.525m LEP Growth Deal grant to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Legal Services Manager.

Reason for Decision

To generate a revenue income to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the sustainability of the Council.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

8. Recommendation of the Appointments and Appeals Committee

The Council considered the recommendation on the appointment of the Director of Communities.

Resolved:

That Phillip Spurr is appointed Director of Communities, subject to HR policies, references and clearances being completed.

Reason for Decision

To ratify the appointment of the Director of Communities.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

(The meeting commenced at 6.40pm and concluded at 7.05pm)

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date