

## **COUNCILLOR BARBARA ASHWORTH, MAYOR**

**MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE**

**DATE OF MEETING: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE: Neil Shaw, Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service  
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer  
Cath Burns, Director of Economic Development  
Adam Allen, Director of Communities  
Karen Spencer, Head of Finance / S151 Officer  
Clare Law, Head of People and Policy  
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager  
Jenni Cook, Committee and Member Services Officer**

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 1 press  
12 members of the public**

At the start of the meeting a moment of silence was observed following the death of former Mayoress Mrs Anne Unsworth.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Janet Eaton, Essex, Farrington Kostyan, and Morris.

**2. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 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 Oakes declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10 as she was a Council representative on the CLAW Board.

Councillor Lythgoe declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10 as he was a Council representative on the Leisure Trust Board.

Councillor Aldred declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10 as he had been involved in the establishment of CLAW and the re-build of Whitworth Civic Hall.

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

The Mayor informed she had organised a photography competition to raise money for the charity fund, everyone was welcome to participate.

The Leader of the Council provided the following updates:

- The lease agreement had been signed for Plot 1 for the nursery at Futures Park, which would create new jobs. Building works had now commenced.
- The Council had purchased tablets for children that couldn't afford them using government funding. This had been in partnership with local schools.
- Covid testing has commenced for Council staff and the Council was working with the army to test the staff of local businesses.
- The Council's first climate change network meeting took place in January and saw local partners joining our mission to reduce carbon emissions.
- New street cleansing routes had started to ensure all areas of the borough were reached to clean roads on a regular basis.

## **POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

### **6. 2021/22 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The Council considered the 2021/22 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Walmsley.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- Covid-19 had impacted on households in Rossendale.
- The reduction of RSG had affected the Council.
- The closure of local police stations was noted.

Members voted on the recommendations of the report as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Aldred	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr A. Barnes	For
Cllr L. Barnes	For
Cllr Brennan	For
Cllr Bromley	For
Cllr Cheetham	For
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Fletcher	For
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Haslam-Jones	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Pendlebury	For
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Roberts	Against

Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Stansfield	Against
Cllr Steen	For
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Walmsley	For
<b>For:</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Against:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Abstentions:</b>	<b>0</b>

**Resolved:**

Council approve:

1. A revenue budget for 2021/22 of £8.903m, as detailed in this report.
2. A Council Tax increase of 1.99% which equates to a rate for Band D for 2021/22 of £285.13.
3. Use of £606k from the Business Rates Retention reserve to support the 2021/22 revenue budget.
4. The proposed fees and charges attached as Appendix 1.
5. The technical resolutions necessary to give effect to these budget proposals attached as Appendix 4.
6. The proposed £100k contribution to Rossendale Leisure Trust funded from the Council's Covid LA support grant allocation.

**Reason for Decision**

The financial position for the council, like all local authorities, is challenging. The council must remain focused on identifying and delivering further savings and income in order to ensure annual balanced budgets over the immediate and medium term. It must also ensure that all its budget resource allocations are directed to the core functions of the council and that the use of its resources drives the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**7. Capital Strategy 2021/22 - 2024/25 and Capital Programme 2021/22**

The Council considered the Capital Strategy 2021/22 - 2024/25 and Capital Programme 2021/22, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Walmsley.

**N.B.** Councillors Roberts and Stansfield left the meeting.

**Resolved:**

1. Full Council approve the council's Capital Strategy 2021/22 - 2024/25.
2. Full Council approve the council's capital programme for 2021/22 and associated capital expenditure of £6.24m.
3. Full Council delegate any in-year further minor amendments to the capital programme to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

**Reason for Decision**

The proposed capital programme for 2021/22 and up to 2024/25 represents an affordable plan, as indicated by the prudential borrowing performance indicators in the Capital Strategy.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**8. Treasury Management Strategy & Treasury Management Practises**

The Council considered the Treasury Management Strategy & Treasury Management Practises, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Walmsley.

**Resolved:**

Council approve:

1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Treasury Management Policy and Practises.
2. The delegation of any further minor amendments to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

**Reason for Decision**

The adoption of the updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Treasury Management Policy and Practises will ensure continued compliance with the Code and continue to manage the council's exposure to financial risk.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**ORDINARY BUSINESS**

**9. Pay Policy Statement**

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement report, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Serridge.

**Resolved:**

Full Council approves the Pay Policy Statement.

**Reason for Decision**

The Pay Policy Statement meets the legal requirements as per the Localism Act 2011.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**10. Transfer of CLAW facilities and The Whitaker**

The Council considered the Transfer of CLAW facilities and The Whitaker report, which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Health and Leisure, Councillor Oakes.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- The Leisure Trust had a proven track record of providing leisure facilities.
- Regular reviews and meetings were already taking place and would continue.
- Debt would not be written off.
- Members were urged to lobby the MP and Ministers regarding better financial support for Leisure Trusts.

Councillors Neal, Powell and Alyson Barnes requested a named vote.

Members voted as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Aldred	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr A. Barnes	For

Cllr L. Barnes	For
Cllr Brennan	For
Cllr Bromley	For
Cllr Cheetham	For
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Fletcher	For
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Haslam-Jones	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Pendlebury	For
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Steen	For
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Walmsley	For
<b>For:</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Against:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Abstentions:</b>	<b>0</b>

**Resolved:**

1. Council agree to the request from the Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW) to surrender their leases to the Whitworth Leisure Centre and The Riverside.
2. Council grants new leases to the Rossendale Leisure Trust for the Whitworth Leisure Centre and The Riverside.
3. Council agree that outstanding CLAW debt transfer to the Rossendale Leisure Trust and be rescheduled to better enable repayment.
4. Council agree that the remaining £70k capital balance earmarked for Whitworth Leisure Centre be used at the discretion of Rossendale Leisure Trust to maximise future income for the facility.
5. Council agree a joint proposal from The Whitaker Community Interest Company and Rossendale Leisure Trust to merge and the existing lease on the Whitaker Museum amended to allow this.
6. Council agree to provide Rossendale Leisure Trust with the following specific support:
  - £100k revenue funding from the council's allocation of Government funding.
  - A lease payment holiday until 31 March 2023.
  - The rescheduling of debt/arrears repayment over a ten-year period ending 31 March 2033.

**Reason for Decision**

To support amalgamation of these organisations for operational management of some of the borough's key leisure/cultural assets.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**(The meeting commenced at 6.45pm and concluded at 8.10pm)**

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date .....