

COUNCILLOR JACKIE OAKES, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

DATE OF MEETING: 15th December 2021

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Oakes (in the Chair)
Councillors Adshead, Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Brennan, Cheetham, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Essex, Foxcroft, Gill, Hughes, Johnson, Kempson, Kostyan, Lythgoe, MacNae, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Pendlebury, Powell, Procter, Rigby, Rooke, Serridge, Steen, Stevens, Thompson, Walmsley, Whitehead and Woods.

IN ATTENDANCE: Neil Shaw, Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer
Mike Atherton, Head of Planning & Building Control
Anne Storah, Principal Planner (Forward Planning)
Lauren Ashworth, Principal Planning Officer
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: By remote access: 12 public observers.
Karen Spencer, Head of Finance/S151 Officer
Jacob Landers, Planning Assistant (Forward Planning)

A short silence was held as a mark of respect for former councillor David Barnes.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors L. Barnes, Haworth and Kenyon.

2. **Minutes**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2021 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**

The following declarations were made:

- 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**

There were no communications from the Mayor or Head of Paid Service.

The Leader of the Council provided the following updates:

The Council had been awarded a Green Flag Award for Stubblelee and Moorlands Park, which was a real credit to the excellent staff in the park who make it so attractive for residents, and also a reflection of all the hard work that community partners have put into the park through the master planning group.

A very successful climate change conference had been held in November to coincide with COP26. The event engaged local businesses in the morning providing advice on support and a new grants scheme to reduce carbon. In the afternoon community groups came together to pledge their commitment to addressing climate change. The Council had committed £1 Million over four years which would help groups to reduce carbon as well as supporting initiatives such as the Rossendale Forest which would see over 6000 trees planted before spring next year. In addition, four refuse vehicles were running on Hydro treated vegetable oil, cutting emissions by 90 percent.

There was a continued challenge by a lack of HGV drivers, but refuse bins had been emptied through redeploying staff and working into weekends.

There were new electrical vehicle charging points in four car parks across the borough as part of a government funded scheme in partnership with the Council.

The Council was working with the other local authorities across Lancashire to see if it could develop a County Deal proposal to put to central Government. This was an exciting opportunity to seek the devolution of Government funding to Lancashire. If agreed, this would see decisions on major issues like town centre regeneration, housing, transport, early years support for families and improving the environment no longer being taken in Whitehall but taking place locally. It was early days in the development of a Deal but the early signs looked really interesting. The Council would not want this funding opportunity to pass by Rossendale and it was hoped this would lead to more money to improve our town centres and to address longstanding problems like flood prevention schemes. Details on the proposed Deal would be discussed formally by each council in Lancashire early in the New Year.

N.B. Councillor Marriott left the meeting prior to the following item.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

6. Adoption of Rossendale Local Plan

The Council considered the adoption of the Rossendale Local Plan.

In consideration of the item the follow comments were made:

- Leader's response to social media comments.
- The plan had been found sound by the inspectors.
- Concerns around infrastructure, access and housing numbers.
- The need to protect our green belt and greenfield land.
- Cost implications of non-adoption.
- Not being able to hold roadshows due to the Covid pandemic, which may have limited residents' involvement.
- Government could step in if the plan was not adopted and enforce a plan.
- Proposed developments would still need to go through due planning process.
- The plan would protect and control future development.
- The Local Plan Steering Group had been involved throughout the plan's development.
- Thanks to officers for all their hard work in delivering this plan.

Councillors Essex, Pendlebury and Serridge requested a named vote.

Members voted as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Samara Barnes	For
Cllr Brennan	For
Cllr Cheetham	Against
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	Against
Cllr Foxcroft	Against
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kempson	Against
Cllr Kostyan	Against
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Morris	Against
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Pendlebury	Against
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Rigby	Against
Cllr Rooke	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Steen	Against
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Thompson	Against
Cllr Walmsley	For
Cllr Whitehead	For
Cllr Woods	Against
For:	21
Against:	11
Abstentions:	0

Resolved:

1. To accept the recommendations contained in the Inspectors' Report dated 19 November 2021 and letter of 26 November 2021.
2. To adopt the Rossendale Local Plan (2019 to 2036) Written Statement and accompanying Policies Map.
3. To commence work on the Supplementary Planning Documents referred to in the Local Plan.

Reason for Decision

It is a statutory requirement to have a Local Plan in place and this will help meet the Borough's affordable and specialist housing needs, whilst providing other infrastructure including open space, education, etc.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

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

7. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22

The Council considered the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22.

Resolved:

Full Council approve the Rossendale Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2022/23 as set out in the report.

Reason for Decision

Adoption of the scheme by full council before 11th March meets the Councils statutory duty.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

8. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) Borough Wide (2021)

The Council considered the Public Space Protection Orders report.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- Electric bikes were covered under the order.
- The PSPOs were welcomed and would assist the police.
- Need to ensure the orders do not lapse.

Resolved:

That following an 8 week period of public consultation and consideration of the same, the attached draft Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) are adopted by the Council.

Reason for Decision

The facilities and enjoyment of our towns, parks and open spaces should be open to everyone without fear, intimidation or harassment, and these measures will ensure that this is the case for the foreseeable future.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

9. Public Meeting Schedule

The Council considered the Public Meeting Schedule.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- Important to set dates and keep to them.

Resolved:

Council agree the Public Meeting Schedule containing dates of public meetings for 2022/2023 as detailed at Appendix A.

Reason for Decision

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

Alternative Options Considered

None.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

10. Appointment of External Auditors

The Council considered the Appointment of External Auditors report.

Resolved:

Council agree to opt into Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, acting as the appointing person for the appointment of external auditors for Rossendale Borough Council.

Reason for Decision

The most cost effective and efficient option is for the council to opt in to the PSAA scheme for the appointment of the External Auditors.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

11. Constitution Review

The Council considered the Constitution Review report.

Resolved:

1. To approve the proposed Councillor Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix 1 and recommend adoption of the said Code to Whitworth Town Council.
2. To approve the proposed additional changes and typographical amendments to parts 3, 4 and 5 as outlined in Appendix 2.

Reason for Decision

The Council is required by law to implement a Constitution and it is in the interests of the Council to regularly review and update the document.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

12. Rossendale – Our Health, Our Wellbeing, Our Place

The Council considered the Health and Wellbeing report.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- Work that Overview and Scrutiny had undertaken on suicide was being looked at across the county and hopefully other authorities would use this model template.
- Positive emphasis on health.
- Welcomed document.
- Ensure photos are local to Rossendale and our residents.
- Dentistry did not seem to feature and it would be appreciated to be considered at some juncture.

Resolved:

Council approve the new partnership Health and Wellbeing Plan for Rossendale – Our Health, Our Wellbeing, Our Place.

Reason for Decision

Our Health, Our Wellbeing, Our Place seeks to maximise the voice of Rossendale within the health sector and to also maximise our impact in improving wellbeing by bringing local providers and the community together.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

NOTICES OF MOTION

13. Notice of motion

Councillor Adshead moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Alyson Barnes:

This Council notes:

*The Declaration by Parliament of an Environment and Climate Emergency in May 2019.
The Declaration of Climate Emergency by this Council in September 2019;
The Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) Climate Change Strategy and 10-year action plan published earlier this year (2021);*

The Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill before Parliament, which, if it became law, would ensure;

- The Paris Agreement is enshrined into law*
- The Leaders' Pledge for Nature is enshrined into law*
- The UK takes full responsibility for its greenhouse gas and ecological footprints*
- The set-up of an independent Climate and Nature Assembly in the UK to develop an emergency strategy.*

This Council therefore resolves to:

- A. declare an ecological emergency*
- B. support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill*
- C. inform the local media of this decision*
- D. write an open letter to Jake Berry and Sara Britcliffe (MPs) urging them to sign up to support the Bill*
- E. write to the CEE Bill Alliance, expressing its support for the Bill*

Councillors Alyson Barnes, Hughes and Serridge requested a named vote.

Members voted as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Samara Barnes	For
Cllr Brennan	For
Cllr Cheetham	Abstain
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	For
Cllr Foxcroft	Against
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kostyan	Against
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Pendlebury	Abstain

Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Rigby	Against
Cllr Rooke	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Steen	Against
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Thompson	Against
Cllr Walmsley	For
Cllr Whitehead	For
Cllr Woods	For
For:	26
Against:	5
Abstentions:	2

Resolved:

Council resolves to:

1. Declare an ecological emergency
2. Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
3. Inform the local media of this decision
4. Write an open letter to Jake Berry and Sara Britcliffe (MPs) urging them to sign up to support the Bill
5. Write to the CEE Bill Alliance, expressing its support for the Bill

Reason for Decision

To support the motion.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

14. Notice of motion

Councillor Pendlebury moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Neal:

Scrutiny is the bedrock of a good council operation. It should form a critical friend and sounding board to support the executive in developing policy. Whilst some elements of scrutiny within the Council are good it was recently identified that this could be better at reviewing internal policies and decisions.

Therefore council resolves to:

- *Establish a new External Scrutiny committee to meet 4 times a year with a membership in line with political balance.*
- *Rename the existing overview & scrutiny committee to become the Internal Scrutiny committee.*
- *Give the leader of the largest opposition group the decision on the chairmanship of the Internal Scrutiny committee.*

An amendment was moved, seconded and accepted as follows:

Overview and Scrutiny is an important function in supporting the council's governance arrangements. An effective scrutiny function encourages constructive challenge and enhances the council's overall performance. This council notes the good work done by all members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and some of the excellent reports they have produced on issues such as holiday hunger and suicide in the borough.

The recent Peer Review has made comment that we could strengthen our Overview and Scrutiny function, something which we welcome, and we await the full report from the Peer Review Team. Council resolves to set up a cross party working group to consider any recommendations and look at how we can strengthen our Scrutiny process and make recommendations to be decided at a full council meeting.

Resolved:

Council resolves to:

- Set up a cross party working group to consider any recommendations of the Peer Review team report and make recommendations as to how we can strengthen our scrutiny process.

Reason for Decision

To support the amended motion.

Alternative Options Considered

The original motion.

15. Notice of motion

Councillor Cheetham moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Steen:

This Notice of Motion proposes that all new Roads, Streets, Avenues and Closes, in Rossendale, be named after any Service Person from the Borough (Ward Specific if possible), who lost their life whilst on Active Service.

The signs should incorporate a Poppy in one corner to signify to the World the individual served King and Country and made the supreme sacrifice of their life so other could live in peace and freedom.

If any extra costs are incurred by the Council, they would be infinitesimally small compared to the price paid by these men / women and their families.

An amendment was moved, seconded and accepted as follows:

Council notes the huge sacrifice made by those who have served our country in the Armed Forces, and firmly feels our street naming policy should acknowledge and respect those people of the former boroughs and urban districts which make up Rossendale. Council therefore moves to amend the current street naming policy to ensure primary consideration is given to acknowledging those Service Persons from the Borough (Ward Specific if possible), who lost their life whilst on Active Service in the naming of all new roads and developments in the borough.

Council also resolves to establish a new cross party working group which in future will decide the final names for new roads and developments in the borough.

Resolved:

Council resolves to:

1. Amend the current street naming policy to ensure primary consideration is given to acknowledging those Service Persons from the Borough (Ward Specific if possible), who lost their life whilst on Active Service in the naming of all new roads and developments in the borough.
2. Establish a new cross party working group which in future will decide the final names for new roads and developments in the borough.

Reason for Decision

To support the amended motion.

Alternative Options Considered

The original motion.

16. Notice of motion

Councillor S.Barnes moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Serridge:

Women and girls of Lancashire are suffering from misogyny, expressed in sexual harassment, domestic abuse and death. Lancashire women suffer a higher than average rate of deaths – the femicide census ranks Lancashire as 13th highest for female killings in a list of 42 police forces in the UK. There is evidence of a link between domestic abuse and terrorism: misogyny affects everyone, not just women.

We call upon the council to write to the Minister of State for Crime and Policing, Kit Malthouse, with the following requests:

- That he prepare legislation to make misogyny a hate crime, to be recorded as such by all police forces across the UK, and prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service with as much vigour as other hate crimes.*
- That police forces should be required to record all instances of femicide, the killing of a woman or girl by a man, with immediate effect.*
- That a task force be set up before the end of this year to assess the extent and impact of incel (involuntary celibate) groups both online and offline, and to work with voluntary groups and experts who have already begun work in this field.*
- That all incidents of domestic violence should be treated as violent assault or grievous bodily harm, to be prosecuted automatically without the victim being required to make a formal complaint.*
- That policing resources should be increased to ensure that police forces are able to deal with these new responsibilities. At the very least they should return to pre 2010 strength.*
- That resources be made available to further study the links between domestic abuse and the perpetrators of terrorist actions.*

An amendment was moved seconded and accepted as follows:

That in addition, Council resolve to set up a cross party working group with a view to assessing areas of concern regarding abuse, as it is not acceptable in any form.

Councillors Powell, Walmsley and Serridge requested a named vote.

Members voted as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Samara Barnes	For
Cllr Brennan	For
Cllr Cheetham	Abstain
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	For
Cllr Foxcroft	Abstain

Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kostyan	Abstain
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Pendlebury	Abstain
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Rigby	Abstain
Cllr Rooke	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Steen	Abstain
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Thompson	Abstain
Cllr Walmsley	For
Cllr Whitehead	For
Cllr Woods	Abstain
For:	25
Against:	0
Abstentions:	8

Resolved:

That the council writes to the Minister of State for Crime and Policing, Kit Malthouse, with the following requests:

- That he prepare legislation to make misogyny a hate crime, to be recorded as such by all police forces across the UK, and prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service with as much vigour as other hate crimes.
- That police forces should be required to record all instances of femicide, the killing of a woman or girl by a man, with immediate effect.
- That a task force be set up before the end of this year to assess the extent and impact of incel (involuntary celibate) groups both online and offline, and to work with voluntary groups and experts who have already begun work in this field.
- That all incidents of domestic violence should be treated as violent assault or grievous bodily harm, to be prosecuted automatically without the victim being required to make a formal complaint.
- That policing resources should be increased to ensure that police forces are able to deal with these new responsibilities. At the very least they should return to pre 2010 strength.
- That resources be made available to further study the links between domestic abuse and the perpetrators of terrorist actions.

That the Council further resolves to set up a cross party working group with view to assessing areas of concern.

Reason for Decision

To support the amended motion.

Alternative Options Considered

The original motion.

(The meeting commenced at 7.03pm and concluded at 9.15pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date