

COUNCILLOR JUNE FORSHAW MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 24th January 2005

PRESENT: The Mayor J Forshaw (in the Chair)
Councillors Atkinson, D Barnes, L Barnes, Challinor,
Crosta, Disley, Driver, Entwistle, Graham, Hancock,
Huntbach, McShea, Neal, J Pawson, S Pawson,
Robertson, Ruddick, Sandiford, Starkey, Swain, Thorne,
Unsworth, and Young

IN ATTENDANCE: Owen Williams – Chief Executive
Gillian Bishop – Deputy Chief Executive
Mark Weston – Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Chris McConville – Principal Administrative Assistant

APOLOGIES: Councillors: A Barnes, Cheetham, Eaton, Farquharson,
Lamb, Marriott, H Steen, P Steen and Tickner

373. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16th December 2004 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

374. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

375. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, THE LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

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

376. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

Councillor McShea asked whether the Leader would agree to supply to all Members of the Council a copy of his response to Councillor Young in respect of the question by Councillor Young at the last Council meeting on the issue of the Leadership of the Council.

The Leader indicated that he would arrange for a copy of his reply to Councillor Young to be forwarded to all Members of the Council.

Councillor McShea asked whether there was any connection between the question asked by Councillor Young at the last Council meeting in respect of the Council Leadership and the offer to the Labour Group of the Chairmanship of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He also asked whether Councillor Young had been made aware of this offer by the Leader.

The Leader indicated that he had spoken to a number of people on the question of committee memberships and chairmanships including Councillors Hancock and Young. He indicated that he did not think he had specifically mentioned his conversation with Councillor Hancock to Councillor Young.

Councillor Neal asked whether the Working Group on Whitworth Civic Hall was making progress, bearing in mind the intention for a report to be presented to the February meeting of Council on the issue.

The Leader replied that there had been several meetings and he had seen several reports of the activities of the Working Group. A further meeting was scheduled for 1st February and he would anticipate further progress being seen as a result of that meeting.

Councillor Neal asked whether the Leader acknowledged the opening of the new aquarium centre in Waterfoot as a welcome addition to the shopping environment and a diversification from the current provision of taxis and takeaway establishments.

The Leader indicated that the new development was seen as a welcome addition in Waterfoot.

Councillor Swain asked whether the MP for Rossendale and Darwen had given any indication that she would assist in achieving a review of the Rate Support Grant Settlement.

The Leader replied that he had not heard from the MP on this issue but he pointed out that given the Rate Support Grant Settlement, a higher than average increase in Council Tax was a potential outcome.

Councillor Hancock referred to the proceedings of the last meeting of the Council and asked whether any progress had been made in identifying alternative sites to the proposed Waste Transfer Site location at Waterbarn Stacksteads.

The Leader replied that he had not been notified by Members of any suitable alternative sites.

Councillor Hancock referred to the Interim Housing Policy on which Consultation had commenced six months ago. He pointed out that the consultation period in respect of this document was a six week period and he was aware of a significant response to the document from residents in the Whitworth area, he asked for information on the current position in respect of this policy.

The Leader advised that he was unable to give a detailed response to the question but pointed out that an item was included on the agenda for the next cycle of Executive meetings.

Councillor Hancock referred to the Rate Support Grant Settlement and asked whether the Leader would be making strong representations to the Government with a view to seeking an increase in the settlement.

The Leader replied that it was proposed that representations would be made in conjunction with certain other local authorities to seek an increase in the settlement. He also advised that he had been invited to meet the Local Government Minister in the near future and he would take the opportunity to raise the issue at that meeting.

377. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions asked at the meeting.

378. RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

Executive – 19th January 2005 – Progress Assessment Report

The Chief Executive gave Members a brief summary of the Audit Commission Progress Assessment Report dated December 2004 and advised that the report would be included in discussion at a proposed Member Development event on 5th February.

The report had been considered by the Executive at their meeting on 19th January and was forwarded to Council for further comments.

Members acknowledged the improvements in the Council's performance since September 2002 but were mindful of the negative comments within the report. In particular there was agreement that the question of political leadership involved all members of the Council and there was an acknowledgement that the capacity of the Council was currently stretched thereby presenting a significant risk.

Resolved:

That the Progress Assessment Report be noted and appropriate action taken on the issues highlighted in the report as agreed at the Executive.

Executive – 19th January 2005 – Corporate Improvement Priorities

Resolved:

1. That the following Corporate Improvement Priorities be adopted by the Council:

1. Finance and Risk Management (Improvements)
2. Member Development and Political Arrangements (Community Network)
3. Human Resources (Improvement)
4. Housing Stock Transfer (Housing)
5. Customer Services (Customers)
6. Revenues and Benefits (Partnerships)
7. Street Scene and Liveability (Environment)
8. Rawtenstall Town Centre (Economy)

These to be awarded the highest priority and classified as priorities to be delivered through targeted additional Council resources.

The following priorities to be delivered through existing Council resources.

Performance Management
Procurement Strategy
District Vision
ELEVATE
Equalities

The following priorities to be delivered through greater levels of external resources

Leisure Services (i.e.improved income levels)

Housing Services (i.e. stock transfer)

Spatial Development and Building Control (i.e. Planning Delivery Grant & Fee Income)

2. That the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan, Best Value Performance Plan and Business Plans be amended to reflect the eight corporate objectives and corporate improved priorities.

3. That Councillor Swain be appointed to oversee the continued performance of those Council activities not identified as corporate improvement priorities.

379. COUNCIL – COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2005

Resolved:

1. That the next ordinary meetings of the Council in 2005 be held commencing at 7pm as follows:-

Wednesday 16th February

Wednesday 30th March

Wednesday 27th April

2. That the IDeA training day originally scheduled for Wednesday 16th February be held on Thursday 17th February.

3. That the Development Control Committee originally scheduled for Wednesday 27th April be held on Thursday 28th April.

380. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Resolved:

1. That the membership of committees and appointment to chairs and vice chairs as detailed below be approved.

Committee

Members

Executive

D Ruddick
W Challinor
J Driver
J Farquharson
M Ormerod
P Steen
A Barnes
D Hancock

Development Control

C Wadsworth
S Pawson
L Barnes
M Crosta
L Entwistle
A Swain
J Thorne
G Atkinson
C Lamb
A Robertson
A Neal

Licensing

B Huntbach
D Barnes
L Barnes
J Eaton
L Entwistle
J Graham
G Nicholass
J Pawson
G Sandiford
H Steen
G Atkinson
J Forshaw
M McShea
T Unsworth
A Neal

Overview & Scrutiny

P Young
P Starkey
D Barnes
B Marriott
G Sandiford
H Steen
A Swain
A Tickner
M Disley
C Lamb
M McShea

Standards

J Graham
D Dawson (Independent Member)
M Crosta
J Pawson
G Atkinson
T Unsworth
P Young
E Tomas (Independent Member)
A Nixon (Independent Member)
A Heakin (Whitworth Town Council Member)

Audit

A Tickner
L Entwistle
G Nicholass
S Pawson
P Starkey
A Robertson
A Neal

Chairs of Committees

Committee	Chair	Vice Chair
Executive	D Ruddick	W Challinor
Development Control	C Wadsworth	S Pawson
Licensing	B Huntbach	D Barnes
Overview & Scrutiny	P Young	P Starkey
Standards	Vacant *	Mr. D. Dawson
Audit	A Tickner	L Entwistle

(* To be appointed by the Standards Committee)

2. That a report be presented to the next meeting of Council on the position of the Chair of Development Control Committee.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 8.10pm)

Mayor