

**COUNCILLOR JOYCE PAWSON, MAYOR**

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

**Date of Meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2007**

**PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor J. Pawson (in the Chair)  
Councillors A. Barnes, L. Barnes, Cheetham,  
Dickinson, Driver, Forshaw, Graham, Haworth,  
Hewlett, Lamb, Lynskey, Morris, Neal, S. Pawson,  
Pilling, Robertson, Ruddick, Sandiford, Smith, Swain,  
Thorne, Tickner, Unsworth and Wilson**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive  
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources  
Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager  
Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager**

**ALSO PRESENT: 1 Member of the Public  
2 Representatives from the Press**

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**MINUTES SILENCE**

The Mayor asked Members of the Council to join her in paying tribute to Councillor Peter Gill. Individual Elected Members spoke about Councillor Gill prior to observing a minute's silence.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Aldred, L. Barnes, Challinor, Eaton, Essex, Gill, Hancock and Steen.

**2. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2007 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

The Mayor reported that there were no items of business.

## **5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPUTY MAYOR, THE LEADER, OR HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE**

The Mayor reported that Marlene Crosta, Janet Farquharson and Michael Ormerod had tendered their resignations from the Council. She asked Members to join her in thanking them for their hard work and the diligent way in which they carried out their duties.

The Leader of the Council reported on the receipt of a letter from Baroness Andrews, Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of the Council's recent corporate assessment. The letter stated that the Council had made significant improvements and the formal engagement process which the Council had been in since 2002 should now cease. The Council still faced challenges and the real test would be how the Council responded to those challenges. A copy of the letter had been sent to the Council's Chief Executive and to Janet Anderson MP.

The Leader further reported that he had written to Owen Williams, the Council's former Chief Executive to thank him for his contribution. He informed the Council that he had received a reply which congratulated Members and Officers on the outcome of the inspection.

The Leader of the Council gave a presentation on the subject of side waste in response to recent media coverage and to provide clarity on the Council's position. He provided information on the Council's current recycling rates and reported that 15 tonnes of side waste was equivalent to an increase of 5% in current recycling rates. It cost £40 for each tonne of side waste however recyclable waste could be disposed of free of charge and in some cases sold to market. He informed the Council that side waste cost in excess of £31,000 to be sent to landfill, however if this was recycled the income to the Council would be over £20,000. In terms of returning to weekly general collections the estimated costs were between £1,110,200 to £1,129,700 per annum. The cost of not introducing the side waste policy was £620,000.

The Leader of the Council reported that leaflets had been provided to all households explaining what could go in the bins and the website was updated with current information.

He informed Council that only 60% of the Borough was participating in recycling and he provided examples of side waste reduction together with a list of neighbouring authorities that did not collect side waste. He further reported that the cost to the Council Tax payers for refuse and recycling in 2006/07 was £38.30 per annum which was less than 0.75p per week per household.

There were no communications from the Chief Executive.

## **6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions raised under this item.

## 7. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

A number of questions were raised under this item and a summary of those questions and responses are detailed below.

In response to a question by Councillor Neal in respect of problems with drains at Riverside Court, Whitworth, the Leader of the Council indicated that this was an operational matter and the question should be forwarded to the Head of Planning, Legal and Democratic Services.

Councillor Neal asked further questions relating to the membership of the Christmas Lights Working Group and travel expenses. He indicated that it would be more appropriate to replace one of the members from Whitworth with a Member from Edenfield so that all areas were represented. In response the Leader of the Council reported that that he would be happy to make a change to the membership, however Members should take a Borough wide view in respect of lights to benefit the whole of the Valley. He further reported that in respect of travel expenses these could only be claimed by Elected Members.

Councillor Lamb referred to the Leader's presentation on side waste. She asked if the Council would provide an additional bin for families with children that used nappies and whether the Council would provide an incentive for parents that used real nappies. In response, the Leader of the Council indicated that the general Policy was that an additional bin would be provided to families with five or more however if there was a genuine reason why an additional bin was required this would be considered on an individual basis. He further reported that the suggestion about an incentive for parents that used real nappies would be considered to see whether the Council should have a Policy on this.

Councillor Lamb asked a further question relating to recycling. She referred to a scheme in another local authority whereby door to door canvassing took place to encourage recycling. She reported that the Council had seen an additional 25% increase and asked the Council to consider a similar scheme. In response, the Leader of the Council reported that a significant amount of education and support was offered to encourage recycling and a positive response had been received from the public in terms of the benefits of recycling.

In response to concerns raised by Councillor Sandiford in respect of the inequality of access to health services for Rossendale citizens, the Leader of the Council reported that Elected Members were actively involved in recent consultations and had expressed concerns about service provision in Rossendale, however those concerns had not been taken into consideration. He further reported that the Council and a number of partners were promoting and supporting a bid to bring services back to Rossendale to ensure effective medical provision in the Borough.

Councillor A. Barnes referred to the serious assault at Stubbylee Park and she indicated that the Council should offer support to both families and the local community to help them come to terms with what had happened. In response the Leader of the Council stated that it was an appalling tragedy and his deepest sympathies were with both families. He reported that the Council had attended a meeting with various agencies and it was important to remember that this was an isolated incident and not part of a wider problem in the Borough.

Councillor A. Barnes highlighted that as part of the Council's role as a Community Leader it should look at community cohesion. In response the Leader of the Council reported that it was essential that young people in the Borough were not stereotyped as a result of what had happened as the overwhelming majority of young people were hardworking, enthusiastic and had a positive outlook.

Councillor A. Barnes asked a further question in respect of recycling. She asked what the Council were doing to target the 40% of people that weren't currently recycling and she asked for a full review of the service. In response the Leader of the Council reported that the 40% of people that did not recycle were, in the main, those that were responsible for leaving side waste.

Councillor Forshaw raised concerns about the standard of maintenance of the grass verges on St Mary's Way and the roundabout in Rawtenstall. She indicated that if the town was kept clean and tidy this could encourage recycling. In response the Leader of the Council reported that Lancashire County Council were responsible for the maintenance of those particular areas and he had been working with the Leader of the County Council to resolve the matter.

Councillor Cheetham congratulated staff, former and current Elected Members on the positive result of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment review. She asked the Leader of the Council to clarify the journey leading up to the improvements. In response the Leader of the Council referred to the inaccurate reporting of particular achievements and that all Members had worked hard to make improvements since the initial inspection.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

### **8a. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet to approve the Statement of Community Involvement which formed part of the Local Development Framework.

#### **Resolved:**

That the Statement of Community Involvement as amended in accordance with the Planning Inspector's binding report be approved and that it be adopted and published thereafter.

## **9. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **9a. GROUNDWORK PENNINE LANCASHIRE**

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which informed Members that Groundwork Pennine Lancashire had been established and the Council had been invited to appoint a Director to the new organisation.

Councillor Neal reported that Groundwork Pennine Lancashire had been successful in obtaining funding for the cycle route through Whitworth.

#### **Resolved:**

That the report be approved and Councillor Cheetham be appointed Director to Groundwork Pennine Lancashire.

**9b. RICHARD WHITAKER ALMSHOUSES CHARITY AND RICHARD WHITAKER CHARITY**

The Council considered the report of the Head of Planning, Legal and Democratic Services on the appointments to the Richard Whitaker Almshouses Charity and the Richard Whitaker Charity.

In response to a question by Councillor Forshaw relating to meetings of the Charity, the Leader of the Council reported that the work of a number of outside bodies was being looked in terms of the opportunities which were available for the community.

**Resolved:**

That Mr Jack Medlock be appointed to serve as Trustee for a period of four years.

**10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**Resolved:**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve disclosure of exempt information relating to both an individual and to the financial or business affairs of any particular person as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

**11. ORGANISATION STRUCTURE: SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which outlined proposals relating to the posts of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services and the Head of Finance.

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

**(The meeting started at 7.00pm and concluded at 8.20pm)**