

COUNCILLOR BRIAN ESSEX, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 26th September 2012

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Essex (in the Chair)
Councillors Aldred, Ashworth, Barnes, Cheetham, Crawforth,
Creaser, De Souza, Eaton, Evans, Farrington, Fletcher, Gill,
Hughes, Jackson, Kenyon, Knowles, Lamb, McInnes, MacNae,
Marriott, Milling, Morris, Neal, Oakes, Pilling, Procter, Roberts,
Robertson, Sandiford, Serridge, Shipley, D.Smith and M.Smith.

IN ATTENDANCE: Helen Lockwood, Chief Executive
Stuart Sugarman, Director of Business
Michelle Hargreaves, Committee and Member Services Officer
Bernard Gwin, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO PRESENT: 1 representative of the press
6 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Bleakley and Councillor Wilkinson.

2. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th July 2012 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 Morris declared an interest on item E6 as the QEII submission was to be located with his ward.

5. OUTSTANDING ITEMS OF BUSINESS FROM THE LAST MEETING

There were no outstanding items to report.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions raised by members of the public.

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

The Mayor had no communications to report.

The Leader informed members that in relation to the district audit report on the purchase of the Valley Centre, it was found that the authority did not act unreasonably or without due process. The audit had cost the council £20,000 and the leader welcomed a contribution offer from Mr Berry for the detriment caused to the Council.

The Leader also informed members that local residents had expressed gratitude for the assistance given from both County and Borough levels during the recent flooding. Thanks were given to all officers for their support to residents during the bad weather. A multi-agency meeting had been held at Futures Park to ensure that everyone was doing all what was possible at this time. The Leader also urged all members to read the County Council's Scrutiny report on roles and responsibilities in relation to flooding and that she would circulate a copy of the report to all members.

The Chief Executive had no communications to report.

8. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

The following issues were raised by Councillors and answered by the Leader or designated person:

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
1.	Measures to safeguard and promote local jobs in Rossendale.	Councillor D. Smith	Councillor MacNae
2.	Emergency/contingency fund used for flood emergencies.	Councillor Milling	Councillor Barnes
3.	Checking flood risks and impact for new residential/commercial planning applications.	Councillor Cheetham	Councillor Barnes
4.	Bocholt trip costs breakdown.	Councillor Eaton	Councillor Serridge
5.	Attendance at the civic parade/church service.	Councillor Evans	Councillor Barnes
6.	Budget provision for new/replacement litter bins.	Councillor Sandiford	Councillor Lamb
7.	Number of trees in Rossendale and Whitworth with TPO's and project funding.	Councillor Neal	Councillor Barnes
8.	Update on the first academic year at Stubblelee Vocational Training Centre.	Councillor Oakes	Councillor MacNae
9.	Update on the bus station in	Councillor	Councillor Barnes

	Rawtenstall and information not been forthcoming from LCC.	Aldred	
10.	Consultation on the abolition of Council Tax benefit and replacement with a local scheme.	Councillor Roberts	Councillor Barnes
11.	Transdev stopping the 8 and X8 bus services and contacting the county council.	Councillor Hughes	Councillor Marriott
12.	Help and support for food banks.	Councillor Serridge	Councillor Marriott
13.	Lighting columns and whether they fall within the conservation area.	Councillor Morris	Councillor MacNae
14.	Water drainage at the Valley Centre site.	Councillor Shipley	Councillor Barnes
15.	New 20mph street signs erected within the valley.	Councillor Crawforth	Councillor Barnes

ORDINARY BUSINESS

9. SCOUT MOOR UPDATE

The Council considered the Scout Moor Update.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Capping the number of wind farms within Rossendale
- Long term security of the site
- Complement to officer who had written the report
- Smaller schemes being just as important than the larger wind farms
- Further plans of wind farms need to take into account water courses and topography of landscape
- Electricity powered in Germany and concerns of increase in fuel prices
- What the public was getting out of it
- Possibility of residents buying shares
- Disposal of the site in 20 years
- Support required from government level

Resolved:

That the contents of the report are noted and that the Director of Business is authorised to organise a presentation to members by Coronation Power at an appropriate time.

10. PREFERRED REGENERATION PARTNER

The Council considered the Preferred Regeneration Development Partner report.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- That the developer was not from the local area
- Key sites developer would be looking at and suggestions welcomed from members

- Future working with Barnfield and Together Housing

Resolved:

1. That the selection of Barnfield Investment Properties with Together Housing as the Councils preferred regeneration development partner be approved.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Business to finalise the partnership agreement between Barnfield Investment Properties with Together Housing and the Council.
3. That the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Tourism & Leisure and the Chief Executive be nominated as Rossendale's representatives on the Shadow Board.
4. That the Director of Business be nominated as Company Secretary for the new Joint Venture Company.
5. That all future minor amendments to the project to be delegated to the Head of Health, Housing & Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

11. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS

The Council considered the report regarding the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections that would take place on 15th November 2012.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Condolences to be sent to Chief Officer at Manchester Metropolitan Police for the loss of 2 Police Officers
- Full and coherent strategy would be welcomed from LCC in order to keep roads and pavements clear in adverse weather conditions
- Forecast of low turnout for the elections due in November.
- Use of alternative vote in the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections.

Resolved:

That members note the contents of the report.

12. CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GREEN BELT AND URBAN BOUNDARY

The Council considered the Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Green Belt and Urban Boundary report.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Protecting the environment- not losing the views in Rossendale
- Duty as a council to do best for the borough

Resolved:

That the contents of the report are noted and the Planning Manager is authorised to undertake consultation on proposed changes to the Green Belt and Urban Boundary with stakeholders. This is the first stage in the preparation of the Lives and Landscapes document, which forms Part 2 of Rossendale's Local Plan, identifying Site Allocations and Development Management policies.

13. MINIMUM UNIT PRICE FOR ALCOHOL

The Council considered the report on the Minimum Unit Price for Alcohol.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Common sense, not penalising sensible drinkers
- Should look at 24 hour drinking
- Consultation about alcohol consumption and measures to address this are welcome
- Minimum price alcohol sold
- Price alone would not solve problem
- Extra taxation on alcohol should go back into NHS and education
- Down to moderation, concerns people would still buy alcohol no matter what the cost would be
- Sacrifices some people would be making at home in order to buy alcohol
- Concern raised and examples given such as: Children taking money from parents to buy alcohol
- Including other aspects such as education as increasing the minimum unit price would not work alone
- Where figures were from at 5.2 of the report
- History of alcohol sales
- Headline grabbing and not actual strategy in place to combat issue

The Chief Executive stated information would be circulated to all members relating to figures in 5.2.

Resolved:

That members did not support the introduction of a minimum unit price nationally, and the campaign for the level to be set at 50p.

14. QEII FIELDS IN TRUST CHALLENGE

The Council considered the views of the Member Response Group in relation to a nominated site for the QEII fields challenge.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Good document
- Officer's to put a good case forward in order to achieve success

Resolved:

To approve the suggestion of the response group for Victoria Park (designated area) to be put forward for nomination by the public on the Fields of Trust website.

15. URGENT DECISIONS

The Mayor reported that the Cabinet had not taken any urgent decisions since the last meeting.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

16a. Recommendation of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Community Engagement Strategy

The Council considered the Community Engagement Strategy with the updated section which incorporated the recommendations of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Consultation and dealing with priorities of constituents
- Resident to see minimum impact of cost reduction
- Acting on the Government Policy
- Solar panels and long term gain from them
- 40% cut to Council spending and whether this was manageable

Resolved:

That Council formally approve the Community Engagement Strategy and Toolkit.

16b. Recommendation of the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Council Complaints and Compliments Review

The Council considered the complaints and compliments for 2011/2012, which included the Local Government Ombudsman’s Annual Letter for the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012.

A point of order was made as Councillor D Smith attempted to refer to the previous item which had been voted on.

A proposal was moved and seconded to move straight to the vote in which the majority of Councillors agreed which became the substantive motion. Members then voted on the recommendation.

Resolved:

That members note the number of formal complaints received by the Council, compliments recorded and the Local Government Ombudsman’s Annual Letter for the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012, and the context around the complaints, compliments and timescales outlined within the report.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.35pm)

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date