

COUNCILLOR AMANDA ROBERTSON, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 11th December 2013

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Helen Lockwood, Chief Executive
Stuart Sugarman, Director of Business
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bleakley, Crawforth, De Souza, Essex, Roberts, D.Smith and Wilkinson.

It was noted that Councillor Eaton would be arriving late.

2. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th September 2013 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 Ashworth declared an interest in minute number 12 as a family member was an employee of Hyndburn Council and affected by the proposals.

5. OUTSTANDING ITEMS OF BUSINESS FROM THE LAST MEETING

There were no outstanding items to report.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

6a. RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT

The Mayor commended Civic Pride on their achievements in the Royal Horticultural Society, Britain in Bloom competition. Chris Blomerley gave a speech and thanked the whole Civic Pride team, and everyone for their support. The team aimed to make the area a better place to live, be educated, work and visit.

N.B. Cllr Eaton entered the meeting and was present for the remaining items.

6b. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following issues were raised by members of the public and were answered by the Leader or designated person:

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
1.	Consultation process for the disposal of public open space.	Mr C.Smith	Councillor Barnes informed that she would ask the Scrutiny Committee to review the process.

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

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Farrington on being awarded the British Empire Medal and invited her to show members her award.

The Leader informed members that there had been no response from Jake Berry M.P. following the Notices of Motion submitted at the previous meeting and the subsequent letters sent asking for his support in bringing the issues to the attention of the relevant ministers.

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.	New housing development in Whitworth where residents were	Councillor Neal	Councillor Barnes informed that the mini

	being charged for bins, when the provision of bins was a condition required of the developer. Also the mini roundabout had not yet been placed as part of the scheme.		roundabout would usually be completed following the development when the highways elements would come in. It was her understanding that the developer would pay for new bins and she would look into this matter.
2.	Recent negative publicity and explaining the reasons for maintaining the Halo as a tourist attraction.	Councillor McInnes	Councillor Barnes informed that entire fittings needed to be replaced as the previous fittings were not fit for purpose. They had been purchased with S106 monies from the health hub that could only be used for the sculpture trail in Rossendale. They had not been previously aware of any ongoing maintenance costs. She would circulate full information to members.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

9. Recommendation of the Governance and Training Working Group: Review of the Constitution

The Council considered the Constitution Review report.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Recommendation 1.2 was not democratic.
- Ward councillors know more about their ward than the chair and vice-chair.
- Alternative option would be to maintain the status quo.
- Planning committee reduced from 11 to 7.
- No representative on Development Control from Whitworth.
- Effects on neighbouring wards.
- Procedure was similar to previous procedure.
- Casting vote of the chair used.

Councillor Serridge informed that he would change back to the initial proposal of chair, vice-chair and opposition spokesperson if it was proposed by the opposition.

Resolved:

That Council agrees the following amendments to the constitution:

1. **Terms of Reference of the Licensing Committee:** Sub-committees will be made up of Licensing Committee members, or if substitutes are required, any other

member may substitute by agreement with the Chief Executive that the member has undertaken the necessary training to take part in the committees work. Where the chair or vice-chair of the Licensing Committee is present at a sub-committee, they will automatically chair the sub-committee without the need to be formally appointed as the chair person.

2. **Planning Call-in Procedure:** as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.
3. **Article 3 – Citizens and the Council:** as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

10. Polling District and Places Review

The Council considered the Polling District and Places Review report.

Councillor Serridge moved and Councillor Barnes seconded the recommendations of the report with an amendment to 5.7 in relation to the proposals for Longholme Ward as follows: *“that RL2 and RL3 remain as per existing arrangements to maintain 3 polling districts and to look at the options of providing a polling station at Rawtenstall Library, St Mary’s Church or Kay Street Baptist (in that order) for the RL2 polling station.”*

In considering the amendment members discussed the following:

- The three sites mentioned were near to existing polling stations.
- Council sets polling districts and the Returning Officer decides the polling stations.
- Was the library DDA compliant?
- Museum was not adequate for the people currently at Oakenhead.
- What about changing the other areas?
- Members had every right to table further amendments.
- Other areas looked at in 2014?

The Chief Executive informed that the polling station request would be noted and given consideration according to their priority listing.

Members were asked to vote on the amendment, and it became the substantive motion.

In considering the report with the amendment members discussed the following:

- Working to engage the public not make it more difficult.
- Low turn outs at elections.
- Long travelling distances in some areas.
- Serving rural communities.
- Protecting the democratic process.
- Promoting postal votes.
- Savings made would not be significant.
- Loss of 2 polling stations previously in Bacup.
- Opening up polling stations closed over the last few years.
- Elderly struggle getting to the Cricket Club.
- Reduced polling stations in rural wards.
- Impractical to lose Walmsley/Shuttleworth.
- Loss of station at £400 compared to postal vote costs.
- Postal costs going up.

- Areas with limited public transport.
- Electorate vote for someone connected with the community who can change lives.
- Since 2008 lost around 13-14 polling stations.
- Cowpe had a reduced bus service.

Councillor Serridge informed that he would propose suspending standing orders in order to allow opposition members to propose an amendment, if they had already spoken on the item.

Resolved:

1. That full Council resolve the amendments to polling district boundaries as listed in the report at paragraph 5.7 with the exception that RL2 and RL3 remain as per existing arrangements.
2. That full Council resolve the merging of polling districts as listed in the report at paragraph 5.7 with the exception that RL2 and RL3 remain as per existing arrangements.
3. That full Council resolve the re-naming of polling districts as listed in the report at paragraph 5.7 with the exception that RL2 and RL3 remain as per existing arrangements.
4. That full Council resolve recommendations to the (Acting) Returning Officer regarding the location of polling stations as listed in the report at paragraph 5.7 with the exception that Longholme Ward maintains 3 polling stations and to look at the options of Rawtenstall Library, St Mary's Church and Kay Street Baptist (in that order) for the RL2 polling station.

11. Implementation of the Scrap Metal Dealer's Act 2013 - Licence Fees

The Council considered the implementation of the Scrap Metal Dealer's Act 2013 – Licence Fees report.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Supports the council's priorities as well as the regeneration agenda.

Resolved:

To approve the fees contained in Table 1 of the report with immediate effect, and agree amendments to delegations, relating to the Scrap Metal Dealers Act (SMDA) 2013.

12. Shared Planning Service across Hyndburn and Rossendale

The Council considered the Shared Planning Service across Hyndburn and Rossendale report.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Concern over potential redundancies, reasonable alternative employment and redeployment.
- Support in principle.
- Which other authorities were considered for shared services?
- Challenges of working across two sites.
- Further joint services and looking into merging with another council.

- Saving money in difficult times.
- Similar issues to Hyndburn.
- 25% of shared services were now in place.
- Staff and unions had agreed to shared services, it was a better option than outsourcing and compulsory redundancies.
- Similar issues to Calderdale in relation to flooding, did we consider them?
- Think of people and accessibility.
- Impact on the Development Control Committee?

Councillor Lamb confirmed that the Chief Planning Officer, Planning Manager and Principal Planning Officer would work across the boroughs, the rest of the officers would work in their own borough, but could be called upon if support was required. Therefore local area knowledge would still be there. Hyndburn meetings were held in the daytime and Rossendale's were in the evening.

Resolved:

1. That members agree the principle of a shared planning service with Hyndburn Borough Council based on the structure in appendix 1, and delegate to the Portfolio Holder and Director of Business the terms of the joint service level agreement to underpin the shared service.
2. To authorise the Chief Planning Officer, Planning Manager and Principal Planning Officer to determine planning applications on behalf of Rossendale Borough Council.

13. Public Meetings Committee Schedule 2014/15

The Council considered the 2014/15 Public Committee Schedule.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Changes to the list before May.
- Checking the Partner Overview and Scrutiny meeting date for March 2015.

Resolved:

That members agree the Committee Schedule containing dates of public meetings for 2014/2015 as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report.

14. Notice of Motion

Councillor McInnes moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Serridge:

"This council notes that the recently published Health Profile for Rossendale shows that life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average. Smoking scores very highly as one of the factors having a detrimental effect on our health, with levels of smoking in pregnancy, adults smoking and smoking-related deaths all being worse than the England average.

Health experts recognise that a key issue in reducing levels of smoking is to stop children and young adults from starting to smoke at all. Statistical evidence shows that people are unlikely to begin smoking beyond the age of 19 so reducing the appeal of

cigarettes to younger people will have the effect of reducing smoking related disease for future generations.

The plain tobacco packaging campaign was key to this strategy, with evidence showing that if cigarettes were packed in standardised packaging that they would be less attractive to children. This Council notes with regret that the Government recently decided not to pursue standardised tobacco packaging and is concerned that the Government may have let the vested interests of the Tobacco Industry take priority over Public Health.

This council resolves to write to Jake Berry MP to request that, in the interests of the health of Rossendale constituents, and particularly our young people, he raise the issue with Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt and campaigns to get plain tobacco packaging back onto this Government's agenda."

Councillor Morris requested an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Serridge to write to both MPs.

In considering the notice of motion with the amendment members discussed the following:

- Evidence from Australia showed that blank packaging was less attractive to young people.
- Standard packaging included colour, typeface, size and graphics.
- It was a national matter but it was relevant at a local level.
- Cost of writing letters and chasing up.
- Health issues and cost is not tackled.
- Responsibilities of parents, schools, teachers and relatives.
- Review is currently taking place with a decision due by March.
- Public choice.
- All governments have found it a useful tax feature.
- Challenging youngsters.
- Electronic cigarettes adding to problems.
- Setting an example within the family.
- Nicotine is still in electronic cigarettes and it is still addictive.
- Tackling peer pressure through schools.
- Use of cannabis was worrying and also needed to be discussed.
- Lobbying local health authorities about people undergoing treatments smoking outside the hospital.
- Challenges at Trafford Hospital.
- Children outside shops asking adults to buy cigarettes.
- Health figures for Rossendale below the index.
- Packaging looks like perfume, sweets and is brightly coloured.
- Figures and statistics come from reliable sources such as the Royal College of Nursing, Cancer Research UK, Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation, Royal College of Physicians, British Heart Foundation, etc.

Resolved:

That Council requests that the Leader write to Jake Berry MP and Graham Jones MP regarding this matter.

15. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2014/15

The Council considered the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2014/15.

Councillor Marriott informed members that this is a similar report to last year and the council was required to consider the scheme each year. The current report provided updates on technical changes.

Resolved:

That Full Council approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2014/15 as set out in the report.

16. Urgent Decisions

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

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.25pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date