

COUNCILLOR GRANVILLE MORRIS, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 22nd March 2017

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Morris (in the Chair)
Councillors Aldred, Ashworth, A. Barnes, L.Barnes, Bromley, Cheetham, Crawforth, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Essex, Fletcher, Graham, Haworth, Hughes, Johnson, Kempson, Lamb, Lythgoe, Marriott, McMahon, Neal, Oakes, Roberts, Robertson, Serridge, Shipley, Smallridge, Smith, Stansfield and Walmsley.

IN ATTENDANCE: Stuart Sugarman, Chief Executive
Clare Birtwistle, Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)
Sam Plum, Director of Communities
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO PRESENT: Joanna Griffin, Committee and Member Services Officer
Glenda Ashton, Committee and Member Services Officer
10 members of the public
1 press

Prior to the start of the meeting a short silence was held as a mark of respect for those affected by the incidents in London.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Kenyon, MacNae, Procter and Steen.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 1st March 2017 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

No declarations of interest were made.

N.B. Councillor Serridge entered the meeting.

5. Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service

The Mayor and Head of Paid Service had no communications to report.

The Leader of the Council updated members in relation to the LCC (Lancashire County Council) buildings under threat. The community centres at Crawshawbooth and Whitewell Bottom were going through an asset transfer process for a long lease and the buildings and services would remain open and be run by community organisations. Both Bacup and Whitworth Library had received a reprieve and she remained optimistic for these. She was also optimistic for Helmshore Textile Museum and Queen Street Mill, Burnley as there were ongoing negotiations with a national organisation in relation to their future as key visitor attractions.

6. ROLL OF HONOUR

The Mayor commended Anthony Gotts and made a presentation regarding his achievements in obtaining a new world record by pushing himself in a manual wheelchair from Land's End to John O'Groats and raising money for charity.

The Mayor commended Tom Hamer and made a presentation regarding his swimming achievements especially in relation to winning 2 silver medals at the Rio Paralympic Games.

The Mayor noted that both individuals had trained and worked hard in their own different fields. They had aimed high and shown both spirit and determination in gaining their achievements. The people of Rossendale should rightfully be very proud of them.

Councillor Essex led three cheers in celebration of their achievements.

The Leader of the Council congratulated both awardees and noted that there were some fantastic people achieving great things in Rossendale and that we should be recognising these achievements and congratulating people more often. She encouraged members to bring forward the names of people who deserved recognition. She thanked Anthony and Tom for attending and for being good ambassadors for the valley.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

7. Pay Policy Statement

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement report. The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, Councillor Marriott, introduced the report and informed that the report came before Council every year and noted that the Council remained a living wage employer.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Reduction in staff and additional duties.

- 7 years austerity.
- No increase in annual pay and the recent 1% capped pay rise.
- Professional assistance given by staff in response to the 2015 Boxing Day floods.
- Striving for excellence.
- Staff were approachable but they receive criticism from a minority of people. People should remember that staff are human beings and don't have a right of reply.

Resolved:

That Full Council approves the Pay Policy Statement.

Reason for Decision

To detail the existing contractual entitlements as per current contracts of employment of senior staff within the Council, in order to meet the legal requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

Alternative Options Considered

None

8. Discretionary Relief NNDR (Spring Budget 2017 changes)

The Council considered the Discretionary Relief NNDR (Spring Budget 2017 changes) report. The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, Councillor Marriott, informed that the purpose of the report was to formally adopt changes in the criteria for the award of NNDR relief following changes announced as part of the spring budget. Councils had been asked to put the changes through using their discretionary powers and they would be reimbursed any additional costs.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Business and the economic development of the community.
- No additional charge on the Council Tax payer.

Resolved:

That members approve the application of relief (discounts) to Non-Domestic Properties in line with the measures outlined in the Spring Budget 2017 for all cases in which relief awards will be fully funded by Government grant.

Reason for Decision

To formally adopt changes in the criteria for the award of NNDR relief.

Alternative Options Considered

None

9. Urgent Decisions

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

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

10. Constitution Review

The Council considered the recommendation of the Governance Working Group regarding the proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to Notices of Motion.

Resolved:

That Council amend the Constitution as follows:

11.1 Notice

Except for motions which can be moved without notice under rule 12, written notices of motion can be submitted to the Chief Executive for inclusion on the Council agenda as follows:

- Notification of a Notice of Motion must be received at least 8 clear working days prior to the meeting.
- The Notice of Motion must be confirmed by at least 2 members in writing (email confirmation will suffice) and be with the Chief Executive at least 5 clear working days prior to the meeting if it is to be included on the Council agenda.

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

11. Councillor James Eaton moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Stansfield:

Dog fouling is a disgusting anti social act, it also carries serious health risks. The majority of complaints received by the Operations Team and Ward Councillors across the Valley concern this.

We the undersigned feel the most effective way of dealing with this would be the employment of a full time Dog Warden. This person would be responsible for enforcement and education.

This would be funded using the amount currently paid as RBCs contribution to the shared service and a levy of 5% on the total allowance paid to each of the 36 Councillors.

In considering the motion, the Portfolio Holder for Operational Services and Development Control noted the following:

- Dog fouling was a disgusting anti-social act along with fly tipping and littering.
- Since the completion of the overview and scrutiny task and finish group additional anti dog fouling signage had been put up including stencilling in several areas.

- Community groups were also getting involved in stencilling problem areas.
- The full time environmental enforcement officer would also be assessing the dog fouling issue.
- The new web site would assist with reporting issues.
- There would be an increase in litter bins which could also be used for dog mess.
- An external dog warden agreement was also in place and in 2015/16 72 stray dogs had been picked up.
- Schemes were being discussed with other councils regarding incentives for reporting dog fouling which led to a prosecution.
- Other options included dog orders and fixed penalty notices.
- Restricting the number of dogs that could be walked to 4 rather than 6.
- One dog warden would not be enough to catch people across the valley.
- Discussions were taking place with Kingdom who operate services across the country. They cover other areas and not just dog fouling.
- Proposals do not financially stack up.
- There was a potential budget of £13k which left a gap of £15k.
- £4k of this was an estimated saving on call out costs this year, but could not be guaranteed going forward.
- Savings would be better used on education and awareness along with some targeted enforcement.
- At Dursley Council both staff and members had been trained to hand out fixed penalty notices.
- It's people that can make the real difference, rather than one dog warden.

In considering the motion members discussed the following:

- A councillor had been previously fined for dog fouling.
- Whitworth Town Council had been granted funding from LCC to erect CCTV in problem areas to capture evidence which could then be used to prosecute.
- Prosecutions would act as a deterrent.
- A Stacksteads youngster lost his sight owing to dog fouling in 1988.
- Reintroduction of dog licences.
- Members allowance was given to charity.
- It's the irresponsible few that create the problems.
- It's a national issue.
- Finding £28k in the budget and bringing solutions.
- Encouraging people to report if they see fouling, littering and fly tipping.
- Bins had been removed 2-3 years ago as it was reported they were not adequately used.
- Dog walking companies were arriving in the valley from outside with around 5 dogs each, bringing deposits with them.
- More education is needed and 5% of members allowances could be used.
- Increase the number of bins near the start of walking routes.
- Dog walking services should be registered in their own authority area, and we should be able to claim from their authorities if there are issues.
- The councillor previously fined was unaware the incident had taken place as they were out running, but they had apologised and paid the fine.
- 5% of members allowances would go towards the £28k needed for a dog warden and go a long way towards solving the problem.

- PSPO's (Public Spaces Protection Orders) could be used.
- There used to be 650 litter bins, but there was now 735.
- Hope the government bring in DNA testing.
- Some people pick it up but then leave it near a hedge or wall when they should carry it home and put it in the green waste bin.
- Previously reported an issue and identified the person but nothing was done.

N.B. Councillor Serridge left the room.

Members continued to discuss the following:

- Have a dog warden 2-3 days a week.
- Name and shame people.

Councillors Eaton, Stansfield and Cheetham requested a recorded vote.

Members continued to discuss the following:

- Prefer fixed penalty scheme.
- The Council was ably assisted by pride groups and fouling/littering was a problem for all of us.
- Interested in the outcome of the Whitworth scheme.
- One dog warden would not be effective for the whole area.
- Members can give up their allowance at any time.
- The proposal did not go far enough to address the problem.

Voting took place on the motion as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Aldred	Against
Cllr Ashworth	Against
Cllr Alyson Barnes	Against
Cllr Lynda Barnes	For
Cllr Bromley	Against
Cllr Cheetham	For
Cllr Crawforth	Against
Cllr Jimmy Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	For
Cllr Fletcher	Against
Cllr Graham	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Hughes	Against
Cllr Johnson	Against
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Lamb	Against
Cllr Lythgoe	Against
Cllr McMahon	Against
Cllr Marriott	Against
Cllr Morris	For

Cllr Neal	Against
Cllr Oakes	Against
Cllr Roberts	For
Cllr Robertson	Against
Cllr Shipley	For
Cllr Smallridge	Against
Cllr Smith	Against
Cllr Stansfield	For
Cllr Walmsley	Against
Total For	12
Total Against	18
Total Abstentions	0

Resolved:

The motion was lost.

Reason for Decision

The motion did not go far enough to address the problem.

Alternative Options Considered

None

(The meeting concluded at 7.45pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date