

**COUNCILLOR PETER STEEN MAYOR**

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

**Date of Meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**PRESENT: The Mayor P Steen (in the Chair)  
Councillors A Barnes, D Barnes, L Barnes, Challinor, Cheetham, Crosta, Dickinson, Driver, Eaton, Entwistle, Essex, Farquharson, Forshaw, Gill, Graham, Haworth, Lamb, Lynskey, Morris, Neal, Ormerod, J Pawson, S Pawson, Robertson, Ruddick, Sandiford, Smith, Starkey, H Steen, Thorne, and Young**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive  
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources  
Helen Lockwood, Head of Customer Services and E-Government  
Linda Fisher, Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Julian Joinson, Democratic Services Manager  
Heather Moore, Committee Services Manager  
Alison Tradewell, Leader's Personal Assistant and Mayoralty Officer**

**APOLOGIES: Councillors: Alcroft, Hancock, Swain and Unsworth**

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**1. ELECTION OF MAYOR**

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Mayor. Councillor Peter Steen was proposed by Councillor Ruddick and seconded by Councillor Challinor.

**Resolved:**

That Councillor Peter Steen be appointed as the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2006/07.

**2. DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor. Councillor J Pawson was proposed by Councillor S Pawson and seconded by Councillor Sandiford.

**Resolved:**

That Councillor J Pawson be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2006/07.

### **3. VOTE OF THANKS**

Councillor Ruddick spoke in relation to the retiring Mayor and Mayoress, to which Councillor Cheetham responded. Councillor Challinor spoke in relation to the retiring Deputy Mayor and Mayoress.

#### **Resolved:**

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to Councillor Jeffrey Davies Cheetham and Mrs Anne Cheetham for the excellent manner in which they have fulfilled their duties as Mayor and Mayoress of the Borough and also to Councillors Peter and Hazel Steen for their valued service as Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress.

### **4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2006 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Mayor thanked councillors for the honour bestowed upon him and gave an undertaking to carry out faithfully the duties of office over the forthcoming year.

The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition remarked on the absence through sickness of Councillor Hancock. They had both visited Councillor Hancock and had been pleased to see that he was in good spirits and making steady progress.

Councillor A Barnes thanked Members on his behalf for the messages of support received. Members wished him a speedy recovery.

### **7. RETIRING COUNCILLORS – VOTE OF THANKS**

The following Members spoke in relation those Councillors who had retired or who had not been returned following the local elections held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006. Councillor D Barnes spoke about Robert Huntbach. Councillor Starkey spoke about Gordon Nicholass. Councillor Cheetham spoke about Barbara Marriott. Councillor A Barnes spoke about Geoffrey Atkinson. Councillor Lamb spoke about Michael McShea. Councillor Robertson spoke about Mollie Disley. Councillor Young spoke about Catherine Pilling. A number of other Members spoke about the role and responsibilities of elected Members.

**Resolved:**

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to retiring Councillors Atkinson, Disley, Huntbach, Marriott, McShea, Nicholass and Pilling for their hard work throughout their service as elected members of the Borough.

**8. ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS**

The Chief Executive submitted a report that the following persons had been elected Councillors on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006 and had each made the necessary Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Mayor welcomed all new and returned Councillors to the Council.

**Resolved:-**

That it be noted that the following persons were elected on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

<b>WARD</b>	<b>PERSON ELECTED</b>
Eden	Jeffrey Davies Cheetham
Eden	Daryl Mark Smith
Goodshaw	Alyson Barnes
Greenfield	Richard Granville Morris
Greensclough	James Eaton
Hareholme	Peter Joseph Gill
Healey & Whitworth	Ronald Alan Neal
Helmshore	Brian Walter Essex
Irwell	Graham Haworth
Longholme	June Forshaw
Stacksteads	Fred Lynskey
Whitewell	David James Hancock
Worsley	Hilary Patricia Ann Dickinson

**9. APPOINTMENTS OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Mayor invited nominations for the positions of Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Farquharson moved and Councillor Driver seconded that Councillor Ruddick be appointed Leader and Councillor Challinor be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for 2006/07.

Members were also invited to consider a comprehensive report of the Chief Executive on the size of and appointments to the Cabinet and Committees; the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees; the allocation of seats to the political groups; and appointments to outside bodies. The Mayor referred to an addendum containing minor amendments, which had been circulated at the meeting.

## **Resolved:-**

1. To note the report of the Chief Executive on the list of annual appointments for 2006/07.
2. That Councillor Ruddick be appointed Leader of the Council, that Councillor Challinor be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council and a Cabinet of six Members be appointed comprising the membership as set out at Appendix 1.
3. That the Committees identified at Appendix 2 be appointed for the ensuing Municipal Year in accordance with Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Group) Regulations 1990, as amended, and that the allocation of seats to each group be as indicated against each Committee listed.
4. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Standards Committee and other Council appointments listed at Appendix 2 be established for the ensuing Municipal Year and that the allocation of seats to each group be as indicated against each Committee, body or position listed.
5. That the Council notes each political group's appointments to fill their allocation of seats on the above mentioned Committees, bodies and individual positions as notified to the Chief Executive at Appendix 2, as amended, and agrees to make those appointments so as to give effect to the wishes of each political group.
6. That the appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs as set out at Appendix 2 be agreed.
7. To agree the list of appointments, as amended, to outside bodies, including school governing bodies, as set out at Appendix 3.

## **10. STATE OF THE BOROUGH**

The Leader provided his annual 'State of the Borough' Report on the Council's achievements to date and its plans for the next year and future years.

The Leader commented that the previous year had been themed as a 'Year of Delivery'. He highlighted recent successes including:- the transfer of the Council's housing stock to Green Vale Homes; the Council's freedom from long term debt; the low level of Council Tax increases; the establishment of the One Stop Shop; the revised website; the planned regeneration of the Valley Centre; the creation of the NEAT teams; waste recycling; improved performance; strong political and officer leadership; a Local Strategic Partnership which was among the best of its kind; strong partnerships; significantly improved customer satisfaction; a modernised approach to tourism; and better staff accommodation. In addition, during the last year the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now known as the Department for Communities and Local Government) had agreed to a lighter form of engagement with the Council in respect of its improvement journey.

The forthcoming year would be themed around a 'Year of Performance'. The Leader summarised how the Council would meet its three key responsibilities within the Community Plan. The relevant structures and systems were now in place to ensure ongoing improvements, including better management of the Council's finances, staffing and performance; a budget closely allied to priorities; the funding of three Police Community Support Officers; a focus on value for money; and pursuit of the equalities standards. An improved customer focus could be seen, as evidenced by increased processing times, the Rossendale Alive Newsletter; an attractive interface with the public at the One Stop Shop; and staff customer training. The existing partnership arrangements and further partnership proposals showed a commitment to strengthening Rossendale's capacity.

The Leader also highlighted how the Council would contribute to the five shared priorities within the Community Plan. Economic improvement was supported by the Rawtenstall Town Centre redevelopment, bus station proposals and investment in Futures Park, together with the production of the Local Development Framework. Environmental improvement included improvements in street cleansing, waste collection, enforcement and crime reduction. In respect of housing, improved kitchens, bathrooms, heating and glazing would roll out to the transferred housing stock, further affordable housing would be developed and housing market renewal funding would renovate existing private properties. The Council would help to develop culture within the Borough through working with the Leisure Trust, with young people and in support of the Adrenalin Gateway proposals. The Council was working closely with the Local Strategic Partnership to develop the Community Network, had provided £1/4M grants to the voluntary sector, and had participated in events to celebrate Local Democracy Week. The Council had also received a commendation for member development under the Municipal Journal Awards, which demonstrated that councillors were rising to the challenges of modern local government.

Councillor A Barnes welcomed the new Mayor and Mayoress and wished them a happy year. She then responded to the Leader's address. She concurred that a number of improvements had taken place and indicated that these had not occurred overnight, but rather had developed over the last three to four years. She commented that all political parties and partner organisations had played a role in this process. She praised the officers for their talent and highly motivated approach. She also outlined a number of areas where she believed that improvements could be made, including the handling of s106 planning agreements; the level of engagement of elected members in decision making; the robustness of customer satisfaction information; and the need to ensure that long term decisions, such as the future of Rawtenstall Town Centre, were taken with due care.

Councillor Neal commended Street Scene and Liveability Services for the progress made during the year, but suggested that further improvements were required. He celebrated Rossendale's achievements in relation to its waste recycling targets, but suggested that nationally the targets were not ambitious enough.

Councillor Young also commended the improvements made by the Council and highlighted a number of concerns about which the Council might be in a position to influence others, including:- the rising cost of housing nationally and its implications for

Rossendale residents; the need for further improvements to highways in Rossendale; and the need to change attitudes to litter through education in school and at home. In addition, the Council could do more to tackle fly-posting and to attract councillors who represented all sectors of the community.

**Resolved:**

To note the Leader's 'State of the Borough' address.

**(The meeting started at 7.00pm and finished at 8.40pm)**