

## COUNCILLOR JACKIE OAKES, MAYOR

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

**DATE OF MEETING:** 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**PRESENT:** The Mayor Councillor Oakes (in the Chair)  
Councillors Adshead, Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Cheetham, James Eaton, Essex, Foxcroft, Hughes, Johnson, Kempson, Kenyon, Lythgoe, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Powell, Procter, Rigby, Rooke, Serridge, Steen, Stevens, Thompson, Walmsley, Whitehead and Woods.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Neil Shaw, Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service  
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer  
Adam Allen, Director of Communities  
Mandy Lewis, Director of Economic Development  
Clare Law, Head of People and Policy  
Karen Spencer, Head of Finance/ S151 Officer  
Anne Storah, Principal Planner- Forward Planning  
John Illingworth, Mayor's Attendant

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** 1 press  
By remote access (Zoom): 3 public observers.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors L Barnes, Janet Eaton, Gill, Haworth, MacNae and Pendelbury.

### 2. Minutes

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 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

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no communications from the Mayor or Head of Paid Service.

The Leader of the Council informed that when government announce the programme for Ukraine refugee support, the Council would participate as they had for other refugee crises along with the local communities. As a mark of solidarity the Ukraine flag had been raised at The Ashcroft in Whitworth and fundraising activities had been undertaken. Preparations had already begun, led by Lancashire County Council, and the Communities Team had been co-ordinating information to local groups. The Council would continue to monitor the situation and were ready to respond.

Discussions were continuing on Lancashire's aspiration to develop a County Deal. The Government's insistence that borough councils cannot be constituent members of a governance structure overseeing a County Deal had triggered all the Lancashire councils to

take stock of their view on a future deal. Discussions remained positive and the Leader would continue to have discussions on how they could plot a way forward.

The Leader of the Council informed that Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust had launched an Initial Response Service for those in need of urgent help with their mental health. The Pennine locality was the first to go live using one “golden” number as a crisis line on 0300 029 0500. A street triage service had also been launched. Councillors were provided with a leaflet containing the relevant information.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES**

### **6. Single Use Plastic Strategy**

The Council considered the Single Use Plastic Strategy.

It was noted that this was a good piece of work and thanks were given to the members and officers that had worked putting the strategy together.

#### **Resolved:**

Council agreed the Single Use Plastics Strategy for Rossendale.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Achieving Plastic Free status and reducing the council’s use of single use plastics is a key priority for the Council as part of its broader strategy to address climate change and carbon reduction. It is considered that the attached strategy provides a balanced approach to reducing Single Use Plastics within the Council and importantly it provides an essential platform for communities in Rossendale to work on becoming accredited as plastic free.

#### **Alternative Options Considered**

None.

### **7. Adoption of Rossendale Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy**

The Council considered the Adoption of Rossendale Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy.

In response to the item, it was confirmed that:

- Sport facilities were essential particularly for our young people and our residents’ mental health.
- This was part of our wellbeing strategy.
- The running track was being replaced following an excellent fundraising campaign by the clubs.
- The area was surrounded by wonderful countryside and had activities such as the Round the Hills Walk.
- There was a wildlife play area in Whitworth as a result of the Council.
- The assessment and strategy were important for planning investment opportunities.
- The closest hockey clubs were Rochdale and Bury.
- It would be beneficial to encourage people to take part in cheaper sports, as some sports were a financial burden for parents.

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**N.B.** Councillor Serridge left the meeting.

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- The strategy would support funding bids for improvements in playing pitches through partner organisations such as Sport England and the Football Foundation.
- The decrease in Government funding to Council’s had impacted on delivery.

Thanks were given to the officers involved in the strategy.

**Resolved:**

1. To adopt the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy (PPOSS).
2. To use the evidence contained to help inform future feasibility work.
3. Any further changes to the document to be delegated to Director of Economic Development in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

**Reason for Decision**

Approval of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy as well as the underlying Assessment Report will ensure that the document can be used in the assessment of contributions arising from planning applications as well as guide the priority of work to be undertaken (including maintenance) and identify where funding applications should be focused to enable the Council to attract inward investment from organisations such as the Football Foundation.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**NOTICES OF MOTION****8. Notice of motion**

Councillor Foxcroft moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Rigby:

*Council requests officers to present a report for members to consider commencement of a consultation process on whether the Council should change from elections in thirds to whole-council elections every 4 years to be triggered upon completion of the Boundary Review.*

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**N.B.** Councillor Serridge returned to the meeting.

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In response to the motion the following was noted:

- There had previously been all out elections.
- There was a need to put forward considered views taking on board the views of our residents.
- Political parties can put views forward too.
- General support for the sentiment, but it should not pre-empt the consultation response.

**Resolved:**

The motion was not carried.

**Reason for Decision**

To reject the motion.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**9. Notice of motion**

Councillor Marriott moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Serridge:

*This Council condemns the war of aggression, war crimes and genocide in Ukraine.*

*This Council will not procure or purchase any goods or services originating from the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus.*

*At the earliest opportunity, this Council will conduct a review of its contracts with commercial companies in order to consider its position with regards to those contracts. Pending the review the Council will not extend or renew contracts with businesses domiciled or operating*

*subsidiaries or supplying goods or services from the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus.*

**Resolved:**

This Council condemns the war of aggression, war crimes and genocide in Ukraine.

This Council will not procure or purchase any goods or services originating from the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus.

At the earliest opportunity, this Council will conduct a review of its contracts with commercial companies in order to consider its position with regards to those contracts. Pending the review the Council will not extend or renew contracts with businesses domiciled or operating subsidiaries or supplying goods or services from the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus.

**Reason for Decision**

To support the motion.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**10. Notice of motion**

Councillor Samara Barnes moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Hughes:

*This council notes:*

- *Inflation is at an all-time high (5.1%) with predictions from the Bank of England projecting this could top 7% over the coming year.*
- *Fuel pump prices have increased*
- *In 'real terms' wages have dropped by 0.9% for total pay and 1% for regular pay <https://inews.co.uk/news/cost-of-living-crisis-only-just-begun-real-terms-pay-cut-soaring-prices-1409119>*
- *Energy prices are soaring, and the energy price cap has been removed*
- *Many of our residents are having to choose between heating and eating.*
- *The governments' **removal of the £20 per week Universal Credit** top-up has had a detrimental effect on residents in Rossendale. People have less money to spend - and in turn that is less money being put into the local economy here in Rossendale.*
- ***National Insurance Contributions** are rising by 1.25% in April. In real terms, it means that an employee earning £20,000 a year will have to pay an extra £130.*
- ***Rents and mortgage payments** are expected to rise. Rents increased by an average of 1.7% to November, and with an anticipated increase in interest rates, mortgage payments will increase.*
- ***Council tax increases** have been seen at borough and county level - due to underinvestment in local authority from central government.*

*We, therefore, ask the council to:*

- *Continue to work with and support local advice agencies, foodbanks and food groups.*
- *Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, requesting that VAT on domestic energy bills is reassessed.*
- *Lobby central government to extend the Household Support Fund past its current March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 end date as we know that people will continue to struggle to pay for food and energy past the deadline date of the scheme.*

In response to the motion the following was noted:

- The Council Tax rebate was welcomed, but it did not go far enough.
- Council had supported residents, Citizens Advice, Credit Unions, food banks and had administered various grants, but these grants were drawing to a close.
- The Communities Team had done some great work and were taking a partnership approach.
- It was important to encourage people to make contact with us at an early stage if they were struggling.
- There was a need to work with our partners such as Together Housing to see how we can best help our residents.
- Government had taken steps to target those who need help the most.
- No child in this country should be born to be hungry.
- Removing the 5% would not be enough but every little helped.
- There was a need to look at what we are doing and identify where the gaps were.

A recorded vote was requested by three members.

Voting took place as follows:

| <b>Name</b>         | <b>Vote</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Cllr Adshead        | For         |
| Cllr Ashworth       | For         |
| Cllr Alyson Barnes  | For         |
| Cllr Samara Barnes  | For         |
| Cllr Cheetham       | Against     |
| Cllr James Eaton    | For         |
| Cllr Essex          | Against     |
| Cllr Foxcroft       | Against     |
| Cllr Hughes         | For         |
| Cllr Johnson        | For         |
| Cllr Kempson        | Against     |
| Cllr Kenyon         | For         |
| Cllr Lythgoe        | For         |
| Cllr Marriott       | For         |
| Cllr Morris         | Against     |
| Cllr Neal           | For         |
| Cllr Oakes          | For         |
| Cllr Powell         | For         |
| Cllr Procter        | For         |
| Cllr Rigby          | Against     |
| Cllr Rooke          | For         |
| Cllr Serridge       | For         |
| Cllr Steen          | Against     |
| Cllr Stevens        | For         |
| Cllr Thompson       | Against     |
| Cllr Walmsley       | For         |
| Cllr Whitehead      | For         |
| Cllr Woods          | Against     |
| <b>For:</b>         | <b>19</b>   |
| <b>Against:</b>     | <b>9</b>    |
| <b>Abstentions:</b> | <b>0</b>    |

**Resolved:**

The council to:

- Continue to work with and support local advice agencies, foodbanks and food groups.
- Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, requesting that VAT on domestic energy bills is reassessed.
- Lobby central government to extend the Household Support Fund past its current March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 end date as we know that people will continue to struggle to pay for food and energy past the deadline date of the scheme.

**Reason for Decision**

To support the motion

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**ORDINARY BUSINESS**

**11. Council Pay Policy Statement**

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement.

**Resolved:**

Full Council approves the Pay Policy Statement.

**Reason for Decision**

The Pay Policy Statement meets the legal requirements as per the Localism Act 2011.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**(The meeting commenced at 6.53pm and concluded at 8.05pm)**

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date .....