

COUNCILLOR THOMAS ALDRED, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 25th February 2015

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Stuart Sugarman, Interim Chief Executive/ Director of Business
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
Phil Seddon, Head of Finance and Property Services
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO PRESENT: 1 representative of the press
5 members of the public
Martin Kay, Rossendale Leisure Trust

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received for Councillor Bleakley.

2. MINUTES

It was moved and seconded to amend the minutes of 17th December 2014 under Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service to reflect that Councillor Jackson would sit on the East Lancashire Health and Well Being Partnership and not the "Board".

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17th December 2014 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record following the amendment detailed above.

3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Aldred and Morris declared a personal interest in minute numbers 9 and 11 as they were board members of the Rossendale Leisure Trust.

Councillor MacNae declared an interest in minute 11 as it was his professional area of interest and would withdraw from the meeting for this item.

Councillor Wilkinson declared a personal interest in minute 13 as he was a member of Rossendale Golf Club and a shareholder.

5. OUTSTANDING ITEMS OF BUSINESS FROM THE LAST MEETING

There were no outstanding items to report.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, 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.	Press article about a bid for £20 million for the regeneration of brownfield land from Pennine Lancashire partners.	Mr John Atherton	Councillor Barnes agreed to make enquiries with the Council's partners.
2.	Deferral of the report on the development of the former Valley Centre.	Mr Michael Pickup	Councillor Barnes confirmed that the item was being brought to a future Council meeting as the Council was still in negotiations with partners.
3.	Valley Centre site and lack of parking. Green Vale Homes move would bring more cars/vans onto the site and stifle the centre.	Mr Chris Smith	Councillor Barnes confirmed that it was subject to a planning application and that it made business sense if staff did not park in the centre, but there was no power to enforce this.

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

There were 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.	Toilet facilities in the One Stop Shop.	Councillor Sandiford	Councillor Serridge gave assurances that the Council had facilities and that these could be used.

2.	Would the current Leader wish to continue as Leader after May? Leader has to be elected once every 4 years.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Barnes confirmed it was subject to a members vote at the Annual Meeting.
3.	Putting back outlying villages on the STAN rota.	Councillor Cheetham	Councillor Barnes agreed to ask the Service Assurance Manager.
4.	Procedures and follow ups taking place regarding taxi licensing.	Councillor Neal	Councillor Serridge informed that an apology had been received from the Chief Executive of Rochdale and there would be further discussions.
5.	Reasons for the resignation of councillors and those standing down.	Councillor Shipley	Councillor Barnes informed she did not expect people to stay for life and members would move on. She placed on record her thanks to the councillors that had resigned.
6.	Projected costs and where contributions were coming from relating to the Valley Centre, e.g. partner contributions.	Councillor Morris	Councillor Barnes agreed to bring the information forward at the earliest opportunity.
7.	Find out over the coming year how many people are applying for blue badges without vehicle access.	Councillor Wilkinson	Councillor Barnes agreed to look into this.

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK ITEMS

9. 2015/16 CORPORATE PRIORITIES, BUDGET, COUNCIL TAX AND THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Council considered the 2015/16 Corporate Priorities, Budget, Council Tax and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Marriott, placed on record his thanks to the Finance and Management Teams in assisting the Cabinet in bringing forward the proposals. He also thanked Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) for their diligence in scrutinising the proposals and also members of the public who took part in the consultation process. Councillor Marriott noted that the fees and charges at the top of the Taxi Licensing page should say “no change” rather than “no charge”.

In presenting the report, Councillor Marriott and Councillor Barnes brought members attention to the following:

- February last year, reliance on transitional fund.
- Budget’s positive movement of £391k this year.
- Greater projected transitional reserve in future years despite cuts.
- Capital investments.

- 158 FTE staff compared with 215 FTE previously.
- 27% staff reduction, loss of 1 in 4 jobs.
- Staff 1% wage rise in 2015/2016.
- Continued support of the living wage.
- 0% increase in Council Tax.
- Growth in rateable valuations.
- Capita contract.
- Remain viable over medium term.
- O&S recommendations on cemetery fees.
- Rise to financial challenges.
- Set aside reserves to achieve ambitious projects.
- Faced a number of challenges.
- Seeing improvements in town centres.
- More empty shops in 2010 than anywhere in the country, no longer the case by 2012.
- Bus station planning application will start multimillion development over next few years.
- Bacup potential with £2 million Town Heritage Initiative starting March.
- Waterfoot, Mytholme development of 12 one bed flats for over 55's.
- Haslingden Task Force addressing concerns of local traders.
- Working with Whitworth Sports Council to support state of the art sports facility.
- Working with CLAW on sustainable leisure facility.
- Influence with partners.
- Obtaining growth funding £1.85 million to deliver Rawtenstall redevelopment project.
- £3.5 million for valley of stone cycleway.
- Improvements through New Hall Hey, rogue landlord scheme, the Whitaker and ski slope investment.
- Focus on business and building relationships with business leaders.
- Business Leaders Forum and taking business plans forward.
- Solomon's gone from 200 staff to 375.
- Businesses hold key to future prosperity.
- Working with Barnfield and Together Housing to develop new sites for growth and job opportunities.
- Funding to support case for commuter rail link to Manchester.
- Working closely with Lancashire County Council (LCC) and investing in transport infrastructure.

Councillor Barnes moved and Councillor Marriott seconded that an additional recommendation be added as follows:

“1.6 That Council commits £1.5 million to support new employment sites in the borough, and to improve and invest in our transport and road infrastructures.”

Full proposals would be brought forward and taken to Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council in due course.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Finance Team and all staff in both preparing the budget and for everyone's efforts during the last year.

Members continued to discuss the following:

- Council Tax is largest single household bill.
- Right and fair there is no increase 6 years in a row.
- Members voting for increases at LCC, Police, and Fire and Rescue.
- 1.99% was minutely below the limit to trigger a referendum.
- General elections in 2 months.
- Discussions over the last 12 months that resources had been cut by central government by 50%.
- Where is 53% cut?
- Benefits cut and unemployment reduced.
- Reduced workforce by 20%.
- Impact on frontline services.
- Greater efficiencies in frontline services with Greater Manchester combined authority.
- Council Tax base increased by 1000 homes.
- Industry growing: J.J. Ormerod respected across the UK and Europe.
- Industry base to be proud of.
- Increase in apprenticeships and self-employment.
- Schools best in the UK, strong, safe and committed.
- Looking south to enter into negotiations on partnerships.
- Driving waste across Lancashire.
- Queues of cars and lorries on roads.
- Greater Manchester is key to vision for rail, transport and M66.
- Thanks given for withdrawing cemetery charges.
- Election of Leader at Annual Council and their appointment of Cabinet.
- Reduction in amount of Housing Benefit.
- Overall budget including all new funding schemes, spending power reduced by 4.7% according to the Department for Communities and Local Government.
- 2015/2016 Council resources reduced by a little over 3% year on year.
- Need to look at what can be spent that there is discretion over.
- If Housing Benefit is removed from the figures there is 50% of what there was previously.
- Revenue support grants reduction of £3.5 million to £1.369 million, 28% of figure in 2011/2012.
- Massive cuts in funding and services.
- 2009/10 reference to ½ of 1% increase.
- Look at Rochdale's position if considering Greater Manchester.
- Police and Crime Commissioner raised general expenditure year on year but intends to cut Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's).
- Police and LCC increases: 5.7% increase over 3 years.
- Improvements with regeneration of brownfield land in Whitworth.
- Waste goes to Stacksteads and Todmorden Road not across Lancashire.
- Outstanding waste operative service 99.99% collection rates.
- Cemetery charges were a separate scheme.
- New garden of remembrance with plots for two lots of ashes.
- One of cheapest places to be buried.
- Majority of people on benefits are people in work.

- Good partnership work.
- Commitment to the living wage.
- Balanced government budget in 1997, followed by deficit, and now reducing deficit.
- Recognising the positive things happening.
- Out-performing our neighbours.
- Local solutions and local action.
- Bringing new business is the future for the area.
- Ability to invest.
- Building on existing projects.
- Long term plan for Rossendale.
- Dual hatted councillors and Council Tax setting.
- Public convenience facilities especially for cyclists needing rest points.
- Reliant on community work, good nature of residents.
- Litter bin and previous location near takeaways.
- Difficultly enforcing fly tipping.
- The Whitaker Museum and maintaining access for local artist exhibitions.
- Congestion on the M66 impacts on the old A56.
- Improvements needed on the by-pass and road resurfacing in Edenfield.
- The Rawtenstall development and whether parking charges would be introduced.
- Looking at budgets according to the services provided and the needs of the service.
- Previously had £12 million budget.
- Continued with 0% increase and efficiencies.
- Engagement through O&S.
- LCC have demand led budgets.
- This year have a £8.9 million budget with inflation and extra costs.

Voting took place on the recommendations of the report, amended Appendix 1 technical resolutions and amendment to include an additional recommendation “That *Council commits £1.5 million to support new employment sites in the borough, and to improve and invest in our transport and road infrastructures.*”

Name	Vote
Cllr Aldred	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Barnes	For
Cllr Cheetham	For
Cllr Crawforth	For
Cllr De Souza	For
Cllr Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	For
Cllr Evans	For
Cllr Farrington	For
Cllr Fletcher	For

Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Jackson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Knowles	For
Cllr Lamb	For
Cllr McMahon	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Robertson	For
Cllr Sandiford	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Shipley	For
Cllr D Smith	For
Cllr M Smith	For
Cllr Wilkinson	For
Total For	33
Total Against	0
Total Abstentions	0

This became the substantive motion.

Voting took place on the substantive motion as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Aldred	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Barnes	For
Cllr Cheetham	For

Cllr Crawford	For
Cllr De Souza	For
Cllr Eaton	For
Cllr Essex	For
Cllr Evans	For
Cllr Farrington	For
Cllr Fletcher	For
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Jackson	For
Cllr Kempson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Knowles	For
Cllr Lamb	For
Cllr McMahon	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Robertson	For
Cllr Sandiford	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Shipley	For
Cllr D Smith	For
Cllr M Smith	For
Cllr Wilkinson	For
Total For	33
Total Against	0
Total Abstentions	0

Resolved:

1. That Council reconfirms the following Corporate Priorities:
 - Regenerating Rossendale: This priority focuses on regeneration in its broadest sense, so it means supporting communities that get on well together, attracting investment, promoting Rossendale, as well as working as an enabler to promote the physical regeneration of Rossendale.
 - Responsive Value for Money Services: This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
 - Clean Green Rossendale: This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.
2. Council approves a net budget 2015/16 of £8,901,100 (before the use of reserves).
3. Council approves a 0% increase in Council Tax and that the Band D equivalent for 2015/16 remains at £253.40.
4. Council approves the technical resolution at Appendix 1.
5. Council approves the changes to Fees and Charges as noted in Appendix 2 (subject to the amendment at the top of the Taxi Licensing fees and charges page).
6. That Council commits £1.5 million to support new employment sites in the borough, and to improve and invest in our transport and road infrastructures.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2015/16.

Alternative Options Considered

None

10. CAPITAL RESOURCES 2015-2016 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Council considered the Capital Resources 2015-2016 and Capital Programme 2015/16 report.

Resolved:

1. Members considered the potential resources for 2015/16 and the medium term.
2. That members approve the affordable capital programme for 2015/16, as set out in Appendix 1.
3. That members approve the additional capital programme requirements, especially the results of the 2012/13 Stock Condition Survey, in order to provide any additional recommendations during 2015/16 to Council members on the prioritisation of further investment should additional resources materialise during 2015/16.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council carries out a sustainable capital programme for 2015/16.

Alternative Options Considered

None

N.B. Councillor MacNae left the Council Chamber during consideration of Item 11.

11. LEISURE INVEST TO SAVE PROJECT/VERTICAL PLAYGROUND – HASLINGDEN SPORTS CENTRE

The Council considered the Leisure Invest to Save Project/Vertical Playground – Haslingden Sports Centre report. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health, Councillor Jackson, informed that it was an important investment to grow the leisure and tourism offer and would develop new partnerships. It would provide an investment to contribute to the sustainability of Rossendale Leisure Trust.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Good scheme bringing support to Haslingden.
- Funding gap and previous investment support.

Councillor Jackson provided clarification that the investment was a loan and not a grant.

Resolved:

1. That members note the positive progress and opportunities brought about for Rossendale through strong partnership work.
2. That members approve financial support to the project detailed within the report, being £275,000 of capital investment (as per paragraph 5.13).
3. That all future negotiations and minor amendments be delegated to the Head of Finance and Property Services.

Reason for Decision

To assist the Council in achieving one of its key Corporate Priorities, being 'Regenerating Rossendale'.

Alternative Options Considered

None

N.B. Councillor MacNae returned to the Council Chamber.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (UPDATES FOR 2015/2016)

The Council considered the Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Practices (Updates for 2015/2016) report. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Marriott, noted that these were important documents which were updated annually.

Resolved:

That member approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Treasury Management Policy and Practices.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the Council continues to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Alternative Options Considered

None

ORDINARY BUSINESS

13. RESPONSES TO LOCAL PLAN GREEN BELT BOUNDARY CHANGES RE-CONSULTATION

The Council considered the report on the responses to the re-consultation.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Thanks to residents who contributed to the consultation, especially the residents in Eden Ward.
- Hard work of the Forward Planning Team.
- Are there more changes, or is this the final copy?
- Longwinded process, but it safeguards from unwanted development.
- Residents want to keep the countryside.
- Developers concerns over risk of brownfield site contamination and preference for green sites, but there are difficulties with utilities on these sites.
- Put brownfield sites to the top of the list.
- Need for a marker on greenbelt land.
- It is vital document for the Development Control Committee.

The Portfolio Holder for Operational Services and Development Control, Councillor Lamb, clarified that the consultation would put forward development sites. The representations would be placed on the Council web site and the consultation timetable would be recirculated to members.

Resolved:

That Council notes the comments received on the Green Belt re-consultation and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Reason for Decision

To consider responses received and their implications for the preparation of the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD *Lives and Landscapes* (Part 2 of the Local Plan), and comments received in relation to the Statement of Community Involvement.

Alternative Options Considered

None

14. REGENERATE PENNINE LANCASHIRE LIMITED: ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

The Council considered the Regenerate Pennine Lancashire Limited: Articles of Association report. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure, Councillor MacNae, informed that there were two elements to the report which were business support and bringing in investment. Last year £13 million of funding had been brought into East Lancashire. The amended articles were a tidying up exercise and would bring more of a local business focus. The contribution to Regenerate Pennine

Lancashire would assist with support costs. This was value for money as the Council gained much more in funding for business beneficiaries.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- County wide Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- Discussions on combined authority and how this fits in.
- How much of the £13 million had come into Rossendale?
- Allowing the private sector to shape: do they not have this ability at the moment?
- Downsizing of the company.
- Greater Manchester combined authority considerations and assurances.

In response to questions from members, Councillor MacNae explained that Regenerate had expertise and the grants had assisted local companies with the creation of jobs. It had previously operated with a governing body made up of member councils and chief executives, and it had been a long process to build in the involvement of business leaders. The articles had been developed under the previous procedures where Housing Market Renewal had a much bigger budget; it was now being streamlined to achieve efficiencies. In relation to combined authority there was a need to weigh up all economic arguments, including recognising the value of the Lancashire economy and the need to build up an evidence base.

Resolved:

1. That members approve the revised Articles of Association for Regenerate Pennine Lancashire Limited.
2. That members approve an annual contribution to Regenerate Pennine Lancashire of £22,993.
3. That all future negotiations and minor amendments to be delegated to the Director of Business in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Reason for Decision

Regenerate Pennine Lancashire provides support, funding and advice to businesses both in Rossendale and across Lancashire. The Company has performed well in its ability to attract funding into the area and is well placed to take advantage of current national business support and economic development schemes.

Alternative Options Considered

None

15. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER VALLEY CENTRE, OLD TOWN HALL AND FORMER ONE STOP SHOP SITES

Resolved:

That the report be deferred.

Reason for Decision

On-going negotiations with the Council's partners.

Alternative Options Considered

None

16. **ADOPTION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL (LGD)**

The Council considered the Adoption of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control (LGD) report. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health, Councillor Jackson, informed that there had been a decline in smoking since 1980, but it had not dropped amongst the poorest groups. Section 5.5 of the report set out the details of the declaration and the work with East Lancashire Partnership in providing messages to help cut smoking.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- E-cigarettes and looking at the wider remit and knock on health impact.
- Smoking cessation clinics for adults and also young people.
- Young people's sessions were Monday and Wednesday at the Boiler House, White Horse Project.

In response to a question from Councillor Neal, Councillor Jackson confirmed that niche tobacco providers were referred to at 5.6 of the report.

Resolved:

That Council formally approves adoption of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and note the requirements on the Council in doing so.

Reason for Decision

The Council has a key role in public health locally. Adopting this Declaration is a clear visible demonstration of this commitment.

Alternative Options Considered

None

17. **URGENT DECISIONS**

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

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

18. **Recommendation of the Governance Working Group: Constitution Review**

The Council considered the Constitution Review report. The Portfolio Holder for Customers, Legal and Licensing, Councillor Serridge, informed that the report was to update the remuneration scheme in the Constitution and to address the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

Resolved:

That Council agrees to amend Part 6 of the Council's Constitution on page 256 and 260 as detailed in Appendix A.

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

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.50pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date