

COUNCILLOR ANN KENYON, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 26th September 2018

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Kenyon (in the Chair)
Councillors Aldred, Ashworth, A. Barnes, Bromley, Cheetham, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Fletcher, Gill, Haworth, Johnson, Kostyan, Lamb, Lythgoe, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Oakes, Procter, Roberts, Robertson, Serridge, Shipley, Smallridge, Stansfield, Steen, Stevens 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: 10 members of the public
1 press

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors L.Barnes, Essex, Farrington, Hughes and Kempson.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the following meetings be signed by the Mayor as a correct record:

- Council Meeting 11th July 2018
- Extraordinary Council Meeting 18th July 2018

3. Urgent Items of Business

There was one urgent item of business regarding a formal request to use the Rossendale Crest by the Friends of Bocholt for use on a plaque commemorating the centenary of the end of World War 1.

Resolved:

That permission be granted.

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

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

The Chief Executive informed that a decision had been taken using emergency powers in consultation with the group leaders to accept Councillor Shipley's reasons for her recent non-attendance at meetings and to continue to support her. Councillor Shipley was welcomed back.

The Leader of the Council had been contacted by several residents concerned about fracking. She informed that the government was consulting on changes to the planning framework and was suggesting carrying out work via permitted development, which would take away decisions at a local level. Decisions could currently be taken by the County Council. The Leader of the Council informed that she would be working with the press to keep the public informed of how they could make their views known.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

6. Food Law Service Plan 2018/19

The Council considered the Food Law Service Plan 2018/19.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Not allowing people who produce food to cut corners.
- Looking at how we resource checks, and the depth of the checks.
- Public safety.
- Was it a one year annual review, or 4 year policy?
- Perpetual offenders and the possibility of speaking to neighbouring properties.
- Thanking officers for their work on the report to fulfil food safety duties.

In response to a query the Chief Executive clarified that it was a one year plan but it contributed towards the priorities of the Corporate Strategy, which was a 4 year strategy.

Resolved:

That the Food Law Service Plan be approved.

Reason for Decision

The Food Law Service Plan for 2018/2019 will deliver the Council's obligations to comply with the FSA's Food Law Code of Practice.

Alternative Options Considered

None

7. Urgent Decisions

The Mayor reported that one special urgency decision had been taken by the Cabinet since the last meeting. The Leader of the Council informed that the decision was concerning an application for a 75% Business Rates Pilot. The government was seeking applications and the bid was being submitted by existing pool members. Further information would be provided if the bid was successful.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

8. Constitution Review

The Council considered the Constitution Review report, which was introduced by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Services. She

informed that changes related to updating the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Delegations Scheme and the task and finish group reporting process.

In considering the report members discussed the following:

- Changes if there are new regulations.
- Cabinet members sometimes attend task and finish groups.
- Knowing who the Senior Management member is.
- Knowing how decisions are recorded in relation to 1.5.

In response to members questions the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council confirmed that:

- Cabinet members only attended task and finish groups as witnesses to answer questions about their portfolio area and not as members of the group.
- The special urgency decision reported earlier at the meeting regarding the pilot scheme was an example of how decisions were recorded and reported in relation to 1.5.
- If Constitution training was required by councillors in relation to the decision making process it was available through Committee and Member Services.
- The framework existed to help understand who can make decisions, how and when.

Resolved:

1. That Council agree the changes to the Constitution in relation to:
 - Changes required to update the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Appendix A).
 - Changes required to update the Officer Delegation Scheme (Appendix C).
2. That Council agree the new Task and Finish Group reporting process (Appendix B).

Reason for Decision

To speed up and modernise the Task and Finish Group reporting process. The Council is also 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

9. Remuneration Review 2018

The Council considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the remuneration review. The report was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, who brought members attention to the following:

- Reviews were undertaken on a 4 year cycle by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in line with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 .
- The panel's findings were that allowances had not increased since 2009 and they had recommended the basic allowance be increased by £500 as detailed at 1.1 and backdated as at 1.2.

- Council had agreed at February budget setting there would be no increases in 2018/19, so the recommendation would create expenditure not budgeted for.
- Members should be aware of in-year financial pressures.
- The £800k reserves had a lifespan, and officers and members were trying to narrow the gap.
- Thanks to the Independent Remuneration Panel for their work and the report.
- Not wanting to add any financial pressures, given the Council's financial challenges.

Councillor Walmsley moved and Councillor Serridge seconded to reject the proposed increase.

In considering the report and proposal members discussed the following:

- Heartened to hear the proposal especially with the Notice of Motion submitted and knowledge that families were struggling.
- Thanks to the Independent Remuneration Panel for their considerations.
- Welcome the proposal not to accept an increase.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal to increase the basic members allowance by £500 to £3,842 a year and backdating to 1st April 2018 is rejected.
2. That the Members Allowances Scheme and section 6 of the Council's Constitution be updated in accordance with any agreed changes.

Reason for Decision

To undertake the 4 yearly review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and make a decision on the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Alternative Options Considered

None

10. Councillor Neal moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Aldred:

We wish to express our concerns that during the recent six weeks school holidays there has been contact from a number of families who have been struggling to feed their children since the introduction of Universal Credit.

We are concerned that if this is a problem in Whitworth, then there are implications for the whole of Rossendale, and a wider impact across the whole of Lancashire.

Given LCC are the Education Authority and will have information with regards to the number of children who are receiving free school meals, could we seek their help and advice with regards to this matter.

Could the Council also to write to both NALC and Central Government to express its concerns with regards to these issues.

In considering the motion members discussed the following:

- Hope all will support the motion given the concerns across the whole of Rossendale.
- There had been a recent report on TV regarding the long school holidays and children from less well-off families being in a worse medical condition than in July.
- Could anything be done as a matter of urgency?
- Holidays can be difficult times for families to get by.
- This has been seen by food banks in recent times.
- Not everyone was yet on Universal Credit, but it was due to be rolled out.
- Trussell Trust worked up and down the country.
- Issues had been flagged up in other parts of the borough.
- Do anything we can to assist.

The Leader of the Council informed that she would ask officers to look into this and that if there were any issues such as this, to bring them forward as they occurred rather than wait.

A named vote was requested by Councillors Serridge, Stevens and Lamb.

Name	Vote
Cllr Aldred	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Bromley	For
Cllr Cheetham	Abstain
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Fletcher	For
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Haworth	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Kostyan	Abstain
Cllr Lamb	For
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Roberts	For
Cllr Robertson	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr Shipley	For
Cllr Smallridge	For
Cllr Stansfield	For
Cllr Steen	For
Cllr Stevens	For
Cllr Walmsley	For
Total For	27

Total Against	0
Total Abstentions	2

Resolved:

The motion was carried.

Reason for Decision

To support the notice of motion.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

(The meeting commenced at 6.55pm and concluded at 7.25pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date