

## **FULL COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 13 July 2023 at 6.00 pm in Telford Theatre, Limes Walk, Oakengates, Telford, TF2 6EP**

**Present:** Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, G H Cook, E Davies, S Davies, P Davis, F Doran, N A Dugmore, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, S Handley, Z Hannington, C Healy, T L B Janke, A S Jhawar, J Jones, G C W Latham-Reynolds, L Lewis, G Luter, A D McClements, R Mehta, K Middleton, H Morgan, T J Nelson, G L Offland, R A Overton, L Parker, I Preece, S J Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes, R Sahota, P J Scott, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, B J Thompson, W L Tomlinson, K T Tomlinson, K Tonks, C R Turley, R Tyrrell, J Urey, O Vickers, P Watling and D R W White

**Apologies:** Councillors L Powers

#### **18            Prayers and Reflections**

Bishop Nick Barrett, representing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, said prayers.

#### **19            Declarations of Interest**

Councillors A J Eade, G Luter, L Parker, W L Tomlinson and O Vickers declared a pecuniary interest in minute number 27 Monitoring Officer and Governance Update. They each indicated that they would leave the room during the item and would not take part in the debate.

#### **20            Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

#### **21            Leader's Report & Announcements**

The Leader provided an update on the 100 day action plan and the promises that had been made during the election campaign. He noted that Steeraway Solar farm had been granted planning permission by the planning inspectorate, against the decision of the Council. The Council was in favour of solar farms, and had granted permission in other locations across the Borough, but noted that they needed to be in the right place.

The Leader stated that he would continue to lobby against the closure of A&E and the women's and children's centre at the Princess Royal Hospital. He stated that the data for the programme was now 8 years out of date.

## **22**            **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor noted the engagements that he had undertaken since the last meeting of Council. In particular, he highlighted meeting Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal on her visit to Harper Adams University.

## **23**            **Public Questions**

The following question from the public had been received.

- (i)      The following question to Cllr L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services) was submitted by Mr Mark Ford:

“Has Telford Council done any analysis on 15/20 minute C40 cities/neighbourhoods and/or LTNs with reference to possibly implementing such schemes in Telford and district?”

Cllr R A Overton, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member: Homes & Enforcement, as Councillor Carter's nominee, responded that, although the Council supported the notion that residents should be able to access services locally to their homes, the Council had no current plans to introduce 15 minute cities into Telford & Wrekin.

## **24**            **Councillor Questions On Notice**

The following questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.2:-

- (a)      Councillor P J Scott asked the following question of Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services):

“Newport is suffering badly from a lack of parking spaces for residents, shoppers, workers, sixth formers, and visitors. There are simply not enough public parking spaces for the number of cars now needing a space. This can only get worse as more houses are built on the periphery of the town. Changes and improvement need to be made. Is the council willing to join me, the other three Borough Councillors and Newport Town Council to look at a 5-year plan to improve the parking situation in the Newport area?”

Councillor Carter responded that the Council had worked closely with ward Members and other stakeholders to create a parking plan for Newport. He noted that further work on this was ongoing and would likely require further consultation shortly.

Councillor Scott asked a supplementary question in relation to delays in producing Traffic Regulation Orders.

Councillor Carter stated that limiting parking in some areas often displaced the problem to other areas.

(b) Councillor P J Scott asked the following question of Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services):

“Following on from the introduction of more rural buses by the council can we please have an update on the usage of the service? Is it showing to be a success or is usage lower than expected? If lower, what are the council doing to get more people using the service?”

Councillor Carter responded that the service had seen an increase in passengers using the service since their introduction. Councillor Carter noted his frustration that Central Government had continue to deny the opportunity for local Council’s to have greater control over their local bus services.

Councillor Scott asked a supplementary question in relation to communications in relation to the scheme.

Councillor Carter stated that more could always be done. A communications package had been planned for this month to highlight the service.

(c) Councillor N A Dugmore asked the following question of Councillor N A M England, Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Service & Governance:

“Can the Cabinet Member update Council on the measures the administration has put in place to mitigate against the impact of inflationary pressure on older residents of the Borough?”

Councillor England responded that many residents were paying the price for the economic failings of central government. Additional funding had been put in place to support Adult Social Care, on top of a comprehensive package of support for residents, such as Council Tax relief.

Councillor Dugmore asked a supplementary question regarding the proposed changes around Adult Social Care charges.

Councillor England stated that the consultation was ongoing and encouraged all residents to engage in the process.

(d) Councillor S P Burrell asked the following question of Councillor E M Callear, Cabinet Member: Education, Employment & Visitor Economy:

“Can the Cabinet Member for Education justify to this Council the Administration’s decision to withdraw funding for denominational home to school transport?”

Councillor Callear responded that the current policy for school transport had been in place since 2020 and followed national statutory guidance. There is no statutory responsibility on Council’s to provide transport for children attending schools with a religious character but the Council did offer some

discretionary support for children from low income families. The policy was in line with the majority of other authorities across the country. The Council provided various other schemes for families, such as subsidised bus routes, which had been specifically commissioned around school start and finish times.

Councillor Burrell asked a supplementary question regarding a particular family who had been denied transport.

Councillor Callear stated that she would look into this further if Councillor Burrell shared the details of this particular family.

(e) Councillor W L Tomlinson asked the following question of Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services):

“Given there has been recent press coverage regarding the former Stoneyhill landfill, specifically the treatment of waste at the site and associated leachate, can the Cabinet Member please confirm what steps will be taken to investigate these concerns and provide assurance to residents that the site is safe.”

Councillor Carter responded that Stoneyhill was a former landfill which closed in 1991. Since then, the site had been actively managed by a specialist contractor with regular and extensive testing taking place.

Councillor Tomlinson asked a supplementary question in relation to the testing results.

Councillor Carter stated that the tests were undertaken by an independent, specialist laboratory, most recently in the last month.

## **25 CSE Inquiry - Update**

The Cabinet Member: Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services) presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance. A short video was played from survivor representatives. The report provided a summary a year on from the publication of the independent inquiry's report; the inquiry had been led by Tom Crowther KC.

Following a robust debate it was:

### **RESOLVED – that:**

- a) The progress made by the Council against the actions contained within the report of the Independent Inquiry into CSE in Telford published on 12 July 2023 be noted;**
- b) The Annual Report of the CSE Joint Review Action Group attached at Appendix A of the report be noted;**
- c) The updates provided by those with lived experience as to the progress of implementation of recommendations be noted.**

**26**            **Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council**

No questions of clarification were raised.

**27**            **Recommendations from Cabinet**

(a)            2022/23 Financial Outturn Report

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services and Governance presented the report of the Director: Finance & Human Resources. The report provided the final outturn position for the year for Members in relation to the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The revenue outturn position for 2022/23, which remains subject to audit by the Council's external auditors, and related virements as outlined in Appendix C of the report be approved;
- b) The transfers and charges to reserves and provisions, and associated approval to the relevant members of the Senior Management Team (as determined by the Chief Executive) after consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to spend the reserves as detailed in Appendix E of the report be approved;
- c) The capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates, re-phasing and virements shown in Appendix D of the report and as summarised in the report be approved;
- d) Authority be delegated to the Director: Finance & HR to make any changes required, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Service & Governance;
- e) The performance against income targets be noted.

(b)            2023/24 Financial Monitoring Report

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services & Governance presented the report of the Director: Finance & Human Resources. The report provided Members with the latest financial monitoring position for the year relating to the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The efficiency proposals, additional income and budget re-alignments summarised in Appendix D of the report and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved;
- b) The changes to the capital programme as detailed in Appendix C of the report and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators be approved.

**28**            **Recommendations from Committees and Boards**

(a) Monitoring Officer and Governance Update

*Following their declaration of interest, Councillors A J Eade, G Luter, L Parker, W L Tomlinson and O Vickers left the room for the determination of this item.*

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Service & Governance presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance. The report outlined a number of governance related matters and changes affecting several committees. The newly formed Governance Committee had taken the responsibilities of the previous Standards and Boundary Review Committees, as well as the Member Development Steering Group.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) **The Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee attached at Appendix A of the report be noted;**
- b) **Authority be delegated to the Governance Committee to approve its own Terms of Reference;**
- c) **The Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee attached at Appendix B of the report be noted;**
- d) **Authority be delegated to the Audit Committee to approve its own Terms of Reference;**
- e) **The Members' Allowance Scheme attached at Appendix C of the report be approved;**
- f) **The work undertaken to date in respect of Member Induction be noted;**
- g) **The details relating to the new Councillor Connect webpages be noted;**
- h) **The work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Committees during the period 2022/23 be noted;**
- i) **The forthcoming changes in respect of electoral administration be noted;**
- j) **A delay of the return of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) until January 2025 be agreed;**
- k) **Authority be delegated to the Governance Committee to establish an IRP to commence work in January 2025.**

*Councillors A J Eade, G Luter, L Parker, W L Tomlinson and O Vickers returned to the Chamber at the conclusion of this item.*

(b) Constitution Update

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services & Governance presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance. The report provided an update to Members on the ongoing review of the Constitution and proposed a revised document for approval.

**RESOLVED – that the revised Constitution as attached in Appendix A of the report be agreed and adopted.**

Councillor S Bentley proposed the following Motion:-

“This Council notes with great concern that a recent residents meeting, arranged by Telford & Wrekin Council, refused entry to the Elected Ward Member and local Parish Councillor who were both also residents. However, while acknowledging the apology later offered to the two elected representatives, this Council gives an absolute guarantee that such an instance will not happen again and that all Elected Members regardless of any political affiliation or none will not be prevented from speaking on behalf of their communities.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor A J Eade.

Councillor R A Overton then moved an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined and removed words shown with a strikethrough.

“This Council notes with ~~great~~ concern that a recent residents meeting, arranged by Telford & Wrekin Council **mistakenly** refused entry to the Elected Ward Member and local Parish Councillor who were both also residents.

However, while acknowledging the apology **offered by officers** ~~later offered~~ to the two elected representatives, this Council gives an absolute guarantee that such an instance will not happen again and that all Elected Members regardless of any political affiliation or none will not be prevented from speaking on behalf of their communities.

**Council re-states its thanks and support to all council officers who come to work each day and do their best for our communities, and whilst mistakes like this are regrettable, they are not representative of the amazing work that this council does day in and day out.**”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor C Healy.

At the end of the debate regarding the amendment, a vote was taken and it was:-

**RESOLVED** – that the amendment be carried and become the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the amended motion was put to the vote and it was:-

**RESOLVED** - that the amended Motion be approved

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm

**Chairman:** .....

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**Date:** Thursday 30 November 2023