

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday, 19 September 2019 at 6.00 pm in The Place, Limes Walk, Oakengates, Telford, TF2 6EP

Present: Councillors S Bentley, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Cassar, E A Clare, G H Cook, S Davies, N A Dugmore, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, R C Evans, V A Fletcher, I T W Fletcher, E J Greenaway, C Healy, V J Holt, M B Hosken, A S Jhawar, J Jones, R T Kiernan, J E Lavery, A Lawrence, J Loveridge, A D McClements, R Mehta, K Middleton, L A Murray, T J Nelson, R A Overton, S J Reynolds, G C W Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes, K S Sahota, J M Seymour, C F Smith, M J Smith, B J Thompson, W L Tomlinson, C R Turley, P Watling, D R W White and D Wright

Apologies: K T Blundell, E J Carter, T L B Janke, G L Offland, J Pinter, P J Scott and K T Tomlinson

35 Prayers

The Reverend Keith Osmund-Smith said prayers.

36 Declarations of Interest

None.

37 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

38 Leader's Report & Announcements

The Leader reflected on a busy summer during which the Council had begun to embed and focus on plans for the next four years to protect, care and invest to create a better borough. The Leader had given evidence to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel looking into the Council's referral to the Secretary of State for Health over Future Fit plans and urged the Minister to make a decision. He further commented on the Council's lobby to change laws around cross-border licensing of private hire vehicles. The Leader went on to highlight the Council's plans to improve the environment, including working with partners to reduce single-use plastics in the Council and community and the launch of the food waste household collection service. He noted that the Council had been the first in the country to apply for a banning order against a rogue landlord and that the new Telford footbridge had been shortlisted for the prestigious International Institution of Civil Engineering Awards. The summer had also seen the Council work with Community Groups to get people involved in physical activity through the "Let's Get Telford

Active” scheme. A series of holiday clubs had also provided activities and a healthy meal for hundreds of children across the borough whose families were struggling with the financial pressures of the long summer holidays.

39 Mayor’s Announcements

The Mayor reflected on his engagements since the previous meeting which included the first anniversary of the Holly Project and the opening of Victoria House in Wellington on behalf of the YMCA, both organisations which would benefit from the current year’s Mayor’s Charity Fund. The Mayor thanked Members for their continued support and looked forward to their support at his Charity Launch event the next evening.

40 Public Questions

No questions had been received.

41 Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council

Members received the report on the Cabinet decisions made since the last meeting of the Council.

Procurement Update

Cllr N ADugmore asked questions on the following elements of the report:-

- Replacement of fleet buses – confirmation sought that replacements will either be hybrid or electric vehicles to follow on from policy agreed at last Council meeting
- £780K spending commitment on the panto – clarification sought on the duration of the contract.

Councillor L D Carter committed to providing a written response.

42 Appointment of Chief Executive

J Rowe, Chief Operating Officer (Interim) and J Eatough, Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement and Commissioning left the meeting for this item of business.

The Leader presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance and Human Resources which recommended the appointment of the Chief Executive and further interim arrangements until the new Chief Executive took up their appointment.

RESOLVED – that

- (a) the appointment of David Sidaway as the new Chief Executive be confirmed as recommended by the Personnel Board on the proposed terms and conditions set out in the report.
- (b) the new Chief Executive is designated as Head of Paid Services from their commencement date
- (c) the new Chief Executive fulfils the role of the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer from their commencement date
- (d) the Director of Customer, Neighbourhood and Well-Being Services continues to be designated Head of Paid Services and Council note that this arrangement will continue up until 1 December 2019 or until the new Chief Executive commences employment and that the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader be authorised to amend these dates
- (e) the Monitoring Officer continues to fulfil the role of the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer and that Council note that this arrangement will continue up until 1 December 2019 or until the new Chief Executive commences employment and that these dates can be amended by that the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader be authorised to amend these dates
- (f) that the Council's Pay Policy be amended to reflect the permanent deletion of the Managing Director post and the permanent addition of the Chief Executive post including details of the salary of the new post.

43 Report from the Independent Remuneration Panel

Professor Steve Leach, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel presented the findings and recommendations of the Panel as set out in the report.

Following a debate which considered the proposed percentage increase of Member Allowances against the equivalent for local government staff, the level and allocation of special responsibility allowances, and the payment of travel and subsistence allowances, it was by a majority:

RESOLVED – that

- (a) the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be received and the recommendations contained therein be accepted;
- (b) the new approved scheme be implemented with effect from the start of the new administration in May 2019;
- (c) that Council record its thanks to Professor Steve Leach, Graham Wynn and Caro Hart for their hard work in undertaking and producing their report for consideration by Council; and

(d) that the recommendations contained in the report on the level of Civic Allowance be paid to those holding the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor be accepted.

44 Questions

The following question was asked under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.2:-

Councillor I T W Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor A J Burford, Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care.

“At the last meeting of the Health & Adult Care Scrutiny committee a Corrine Ralph from Telford CCG when I asked about the merger to Telford CCG and Shropshire CCG advised members that it was not a merger but the two organisations are working together. Could the Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care please advise members if the two CCG’s are to be merged?”

Councillor Burford responded that strictly speaking it was not a merger rather a dissolution of two bodies and the creation of a new one – that is what one might call a merger. Members were aware that the Council had opposed the centralising approach of the creation of single CCG which it was feared would diminish local accountability and Telford & Wrekin’s separate identity and particular needs. The Council had argued that what was happening was more than an administrative change and was a significant change that required full public consultation. What was more, this came against a backdrop of massive cost savings and cuts that both current CCGs, and Shropshire in particular, needed to make to get their growing deficit under control. It was true that the NHS Long Term Plan wanted to see strategic commissioning in place across a wider footprint aligned to Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs). The Council recognised that some things were better commissioned in this way (eg acute care and certain specialist provision), however the NHS Long Term Plan also recognised the importance of place and the value that local authorities brought in developing effective integrated primary, community and social care services for their community and the positive impact that this could have on a person’s wellbeing. To this end, an integrated place partnership was already up and running in Telford and Wrekin and proving its worth with good working relationships between the local authority, NHS and all partners. The Cabinet believed that this partnership should be at the centre of any plans moving forward with service being commissioned and delivered by the Council and its partners unless there was a good reason for a particular service to be commissioned across a wider area. Acceptance of this principle was being sought but time was short as the two CCGs were required to present an outline of their plans to the NHS by the end of September and, if approved, they would be put in place by April 2020. Meanwhile, the Cabinet continued to argue for proper consultation on the merger plan and the way in which the new model would operate, keeping all options on table to resist the proposals as it was not clear how local accountability would be delivered.

Councillor Fletcher noted that recent reports in the Shropshire Star stated that Telford CCG had a deficit of about £4m but Shropshire CCG’s deficit was

£40m and likely to rise to £76m. He asked if the Cabinet Member could give any indication of whether resources used in Telford at the current time would not be used to pay off the debts of Shropshire?

Councillor Burford replied that this was an important question but clearly it would not presented in that way but if one brought to two bodies together with debts of that size (and incidentally the Telford & Wrekin CCG was likely to go above the figure mentioned), they would have to be addressed jointly meaning that everybody suffered as a result of the total debt. He anticipated that it would be said there were savings to be made on strategic commissioning (eg hospitals and acute care) by combining into one body but that was effectively what already happened as the services were jointly commissioned by the two CCGs. The question was very pertinent and Councillor Burford feared that Telford would be worse off, hence the Cabinet approach.

45 Notice of Motion

Councillor S P Burrell proposed the following Motion:-

“This Council calls on Government to amend legislation licensing the operation of private hire vehicles to allow local authorities greater control of the private hire operators providing services within their area.

In addition, this Council commits to making the fullest use of its powers to ensure, that the drivers and operators of private hire vehicles in the Borough receive appropriate training, development and support and are committed to the very best standards of service and safeguarding for each and every passenger.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor T J Nelson.

Following a robust debate, the Motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED - that the motion be approved

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday, 23 January 2020