

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF COUNCIL

18th July 2017

At a Meeting of Rugby Borough Council held on 18th July 2017.

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Garcia), Councillors Mrs A'Barrow, Allen, Mrs Avis, Brader, Mrs Bragg, Brown, Butlin, Cade, Cranham, Douglas, Miss Dumbleton, Ms Edwards, Ellis, Gillias, Keeling, Miss Lawrence, Lewis, Lowe, Mahoney, Mistry, Mrs Nash, Mrs O'Rourke, Pacey-Day, Mrs Parker, Poole, Ms Robbins, Roodhouse, Mrs Roodhouse, Sandison, Mrs Simpson-Vince, Srivastava, Stokes, Mrs Timms, Ms Watson-Merret and Dr Williams.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Mrs Crane, Leigh Hunt, Mrs New, Roberts, Mrs Roberts and Dr Shera.

14. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 18th May 2017 and the minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 21st June 2017 were approved and signed by the Mayor.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Item 5 of Part 1 - Question (f) - Councillor Douglas (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of his employment).

16. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the statement made at Full Council, on Tuesday 25th April 2017 regarding the Council's Equality Peer Review re-accreditation for Excellence.

She was now extremely pleased and proud to announce that Rugby Borough Council had been re-accredited as 'Excellent' once again.

The Peer Review Team had been really impressed with how the Council had maintained its strong focus on equalities since it first gained the Excellent level award in 2014. It was evident that equalities was seen as very much part of the general business at the Council and that it's "Everybody's business".

The Assessors had found marvellous examples of good practice of how the Council works with its communities and the wider sectors to achieve positive results that make a real difference to people lives.

The Mayor thanked all those who had contributed to this review and supported the Council to achieve this standard, it had been a real team effort.

The Mayor particularly thanked Raj Chand, Head of Communities and Homes, for her continuous leadership of this key area and ensuring the Council remained focussed at all times. The Mayor also conveyed her thanks to Councillor Poole for his commitment and Leadership as Chair of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

The Mayor said equality and diversity, openness and transparency was fundamental to how this Council operated and that we should all be proud of being part of an organisation that demonstrated excellence in this area over and over again.

The Council placed on record its thanks to the Working Group, Leader of the Council, Mrs Minakshee Patel and Mrs Raj Chand for their hard work and efforts in achieving this re-accreditation.

17. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

(A) Councillor Ellis asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stokes:

“The Leader has previously stated that when sponsors for the Hall of Fame are secured this Council would be notified.

As it is now over two months since the Leader and Executive Director visited Japan, will the Leader advise of any developments?”

Councillor Stokes, Leader of the Council, replied as follows:

“I would refer Cllr Ellis to the answer I gave at a previous Council meeting, to which he himself, has referred in his question.”

Councillor Ellis then asked how many sponsors were there for the Hall of Fame?

Councillor Stokes replied that when there was any news he would advise Council accordingly.

(B) Councillor Ellis asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stokes:

“Can I seek clarification from the Leader as to this Councils current financial position?”

Councillor Stokes, Leader of the Council, replied as follows:

“The Council’s current financial position is a sound one and offers the residents of Rugby excellent services and value for their money. Furthermore, as we operate a robust Medium Term Financial Planning policy, this enables any future challenges to be highlighted and addressed before they become a major issue.

I would refer Cllr Ellis to the already published documents for the details and facts, such as a recent Cabinet report detailing the year end position for 2016/17 and the Draft Financial Statements which are being tabled in the Audit and Ethics Committee.”

Councillor Ellis then asked that without a payment vehicle for the Hall of Fame, what was the impact on the Council’s finances.

Councillor Stokes sought clarification regarding the expression “payment vehicle”.

(C) Councillor Ellis asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stokes:

“ How many meetings has the Leader taken with the portfolio holder and Head of Growth & Investment regarding the Local Plan ?”

Councillor Stokes, Leader of the Council, replied as follows:

“There is no requirement for the meetings that Cllr Ellis refers to, to be recorded. Therefore, I am unable to provide the detail other than to say as with all important matters, I was kept fully briefed.”

(D) Councillor Roodhouse asked the Environment and Public Realm Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Parker:

“Could the Portfolio Holder clarify the Council’s policy for collecting green bins from residents who do not want to participate in the scheme and don’t wish to keep the bins?”

Councillor Mrs Parker replied as follows:

“ Any households who didn’t wish to participate in the garden waste collection service and no longer required their green bins were asked to contact Rugby Borough Council contact centre.

This was then passed to the works service unit who would arrange collection.

Due to changes in management this has slightly slipped, the new Waste and Transport Manager has programmed this operation to commence at the end of July 2017 and is currently notifying all residents, who have previously contacted the contact centre”.

Councillor Roodhouse then responded by saying there were mixed messages regarding this matter and he sought confirmation that there was a fixed timetable in place for the return of green bins.

Councillor Mrs Parker confirmed that there was a fixed timescale and that whilst it was regrettable that there had been some slippage she was pleased with how this matter had progressed.

(E) Councillor Douglas asked the Growth & Investment Portfolio Holder, Mrs Timms:

“Does Rugby Borough Council have a strategic policy and plan in place with regards to upgrading changing room facilities at playing fields in Rugby to allow for greater community use?”

Councillor Mrs Timms replied as follows:

“The Borough Council operates 4 changing rooms in Rugby at Alwyn Road, Ashlawn, GEC and Whinfield Recreation Grounds. The old changing facility at Hillmorton Recreation Ground is unsafe and closed. The Council has strategies relating to Open Space, Playing Pitches and Sports Facilities. Whilst there is no specific policy on the upgrading of changing facilities for community use, site by site issues are assessed within the current Playing Pitch Strategy which has recently been updated. As the Council has a limited capital budget for investment in parks and open spaces, officers seek a range of funding opportunities including developer contributions to upgrade facilities where opportunities arise.”

Councillor Douglas then asked whether there should be a policy for this.

Councillor Mrs Timms replied by saying she did not consider it was necessary to have a policy for such a small number of changing rooms but she was happy to discuss the matter with any interested parties.

(F) Councillor Douglas asked the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, Mrs Timms:

“Is Rugby Borough Council applying to the Housing Infrastructure Fund in order to ensure Rugby gets the infrastructure we need alongside any new housing ? ”

Councillor Mrs Timms replied as follows:

“The Housing Infrastructure Fund which has recently been announced is intended to enable and accelerate housing growth and its supporting infrastructure – both issues that are very relevant to this Borough, our recently adopted Corporate Strategy and our draft Local Plan that has recently been submitted to Government. The criteria for applying to the fund is an up to date plan or plan submitted to the Secretary of State.

The Fund is made up of two elements, one available to district and Borough authorities and the other larger fund that is accessible to upper tier authorities only. Council officers are in the process of considering all possible options for our own bid and have commenced discussions with Warwickshire County Council to consider what bids could be made in partnership.

Bids are not submitted until September this year and members will be advised on the progress of this work.”

Councillor Douglas then asked if the Portfolio Holder considered that robust infrastructure was required.

Councillor Timms agreed that correct infrastructure was required and this was addressed through the Local Plan, which had been submitted to the Secretary of State last Thursday.

18. REPORT OF LICENSING & SAFETY COMMITTEE - 11th MAY 2017

RESOLVED THAT - the report be confirmed and adopted.

19. REPORT OF CABINET - 5th JUNE 2017

RESOLVED THAT - the report be confirmed and adopted.

20. REPORT OF CABINET - 26th JUNE 2017

RESOLVED THAT - the report be confirmed and adopted.

21. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) West Midlands Combined Authority

Council considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer concerning the West Midlands Combined Authority.

RESOLVED THAT- Council notes the progress of the West Midlands Combined Authority and continues to engage fully in its operation.

22. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

23. COMMON SEAL

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

RESOLVED THAT - the Common Seal be affixed to the various orders, deeds and documents to be made or entered into for carrying into effect the several decisions, matters and things approved by the Council and more particularly set out in the Panels and Committees reports adopted at this meeting.

MAYOR