

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2017

Present:

Councillor I Coleman (in the Chair)

Councillors

Benson	Cox	Kirkland	Smith
Blackburn	Critchley	Mitchell	Stansfield
Cain	Cross	O'Hara	I Taylor
Callow	Elmes	Robertson BEM	L Taylor
Mrs Callow JP	Galley	Roberts	L Williams
Campbell	Mrs Henderson MBE	Rowson	T Williams
Clapham	Hobson	Ryan	Mrs Wright
D Coleman	Hunter	D Scott	
G Coleman	Hutton	Mrs Scott	
Collett	Jackson	Singleton	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Diane Booth, Director Children's Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Place

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

Steve Thompson, Director of Resources

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships/Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Blackburn declared a personal interest in agenda item 8b 'NJC Pay Claim 2018' as a member of the National Joint Committee appointed by the Local Government Association.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 28 JUNE AND 19 JULY 2017

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meetings held on 28 June and 19 July 2017, be signed by the Mayor as correct records.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that he had received a letter from Brigadier Rafferty MBE expressing thanks and appreciation, on behalf of The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, for the recent Freedom of Entry award and the hospitality offered by the Council.

The Mayor also advised members that the Blackpool Faith and Communities Partnership had been launched the previous day, and invited members to sign the partnership statement to pledge their support.

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4 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

Mrs Zoe Walsh addressed the Council on the decision to cease funding for the Star Buddies breastfeeding peer support programme and called for the Council to extend the service while it conducted a public consultation and equality impact assessment.

The Leader of the Council invited Ms Walsh to meet with himself, Councillor Amy Cross, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health and the Director of Public Health to discuss the issue.

5 EXECUTIVE REPORTS AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS

The Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Secretary presented reports to the Council on work undertaken in their own portfolio area and those portfolios under their responsibility. The reports covered corporate, strategic and policy issues, together with work being undertaken in transforming services and with partners.

Council representatives of the Fire Authority also presented a report on the work of the authority from the meetings held in April and June 2017.

Questions, comments and debate were invited from all councillors on each of the report areas.

Notes:

- (1) Councillor Campbell agreed to provide a response to Councillor Galley on the timescale for ordering and erecting signs in relation to the Public Space Protection Order for parks.
- (2) Following consideration of the report from the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Cox left the meeting.
- (3) During the presentation of the report from the Cabinet Secretary, Councillor Mrs Henderson left the meeting.
- (4) In response to the concerns expressed by Councillor Mrs Callow surrounding the death of a war veteran, Councillor Cross agreed to provide all members with the coroner's report and service review report upon completion.

6 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Council considered a report in relation to the appointment of Vice Chairman of the Appeals Committee, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Local Government Act 1972 and following a recruitment process, to consider the recommendation of the Recruitment Panel (chaired by Councillor Galley) for the appointment of the independent member of the Audit Committee.

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Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Galley seconded):

- ‘1. That Councillor Vikki Singleton be appointed as the Vice Chairman of the Appeals Committee.
2. That Yvonne Russell be appointed as the independent co-opted member of the Audit Committee.’

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

7 RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMPANIES

Members considered a report regarding the Council’s role with its wholly owned companies.

The Council noted that since 2012 there had been a number of changes to the wholly owned companies of the Council, including standardisation of governance arrangements, the introduction of independent non-executive directors and the establishment of an informal Shareholder’s Panel to develop the relationship with between the companies and the Council. It was also noted that since that time, two further wholly-owned companies had been set up in 2014 and 2015 and that there had been proposals in the budget agreed by Council in 2017, for two additional companies relating to social care and culture.

The report acknowledged that given the changes and forthcoming proposals, and with competing commitments, it was timely to review the Shareholder Panel arrangements and links between the companies and the Shareholder to improve accessibility with the senior officer core and to increase member involvement on the part of the shareholder.

Members went on to consider proposals for the establishment of a Shareholder’s Advisory Board, as a formal, politically-balanced committee of the Council, which, working with a senior link officer of the Council, would provide strategic direction for the company group, provide links between the Council and individual companies and make recommendations as appropriate to the Council’s Executive.

Members were also informed that in view of the recent review of arrangements and proposals within the report, the Independent Remuneration Panel had met to consider whether special responsibility allowances would be appropriate, should the Council approve the recommendations for the establishment of a Shareholder’s Advisory Board.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Campbell seconded):

- ‘1. To note that the Chief Executive will designate a lead officer to work on behalf of the shareholder with the Council’s wholly owned companies, from within the senior/chief officer management structure.

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2. That a Shareholder's Advisory Board be established under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, with the terms of reference as at Appendix 7(a) to the report and with a membership of three Labour members and one Conservative member.
3. To approve the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and subsequent changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme.
4. To agree that the Chairman of the Board be an Executive member and that Councillor Ivan Taylor is appointed to this role.
5. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to update the constitution accordingly.'

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

8 INDEPENDENT REGULATORY BODY FOR FOOTBALL

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor T Williams proposed (and Councillor Stansfield seconded):

'English football, particularly at the highest level, enjoys unparalleled popularity with record attendances creating economic stability to both the club being supported and the local businesses and general community.

Clubs such as Leyton Orient, Leeds and the town's own club at Blackpool have received high levels of media publicity for the wrong reasons. Disputes between fans and owners, for whatever causes, fail to be rectified or addressed by the Football Association who have delegated too much of its powers and can no longer perform a proper governing role. Ill-discipline on the pitch is stringently marshalled by the FA, yet bad governance off it has been delegated to the clubs themselves to referee.

Under the banner 'Fans Not Numbers' business entrepreneur Jamie Fuller the chairman of sports clothing manufacturer 'Skins' together with 'Supporters Direct' the national supporters association with over 400,000 members, are currently lobbying local politicians and national government to set up a multi-party supported Government appointed Independent Regulatory Body. A body that can not only set, but crucially, can enforce off-pitch regulations that include the powers to sanction clubs who are non-compliant. An Independent Regulatory Body could ensure that no clubs are promoted despite breaching rules, reliant on funding from unnamed entities or rendered homeless.

The funding for the Independent Body could be met with a small percentage levy on commercial rights income generated by the leagues.

As Blackpool has obvious and evident issues between its football club and a huge majority of local and out of town fans. This Council has a duty and an economical interest to promote change to the regulatory system to ensure that energy is spent on building not destroying supporter and community relations.

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The United Kingdom is only one of five countries in the world that do not have an Independent Regulatory Body.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister Mrs. Theresa May and the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Karen Bradley MP confirming the Council's support of the concept to appoint a Government Independent Regulatory Body for football in the UK.

That the formation of the body should be supported by all political parties to address conflicts between owners and fans and to formulate a blueprint for how football governance should work and the changes to bring it about to prevent future conflicts that result in negative community and damaging economic downturn to the towns and cities affected.'

Members went on to debate the motion.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

9 NJC PAY CLAIM 2018

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor Campbell proposed (and Councillor Collett seconded):

'Blackpool Council notes that:

- NJC basic pay has fallen by 21% since 2010 in real terms
- NJC workers had a three-year pay freeze from 2010/ 2012
- Local terms and conditions of many NJC employees have also been cut, impacting on their overall earnings
- NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector
- Job evaluated pay structures are being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements needed to reflect the increased National Living Wage and the Foundation Living Wage
- There are growing equal and fair pay risks resulting from this situation

Blackpool Council therefore supports the NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of Council and school workers and calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint. NJC pay cannot be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector. Blackpool Council also welcomes the joint review of the NJC pay spine to remedy the turbulence caused by bottom-loaded pay settlements.

This Council also notes the drastic ongoing cuts to Local Government funding and calls on the Government to provide additional funding to fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.

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This Council therefore resolves to:

- Call immediately on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to Government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review and notify us of their action in this regard
- Requests the Chief Executive, to write on behalf of the Council to the Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting the NJC pay claim and seeking additional funding to fund a decent pay rise and the pay spine review
- Requests the Chief Executive to arrange a meeting with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.'

Members then went on to debate the motion.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

10 MINISTER FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor Mrs Wright proposed (and Councillor Kirkland seconded):

'The Council calls upon the Prime Minister to consider the need for a role of 'Minister for Older People' in Government. There is currently a Minister for Disabled People who works successfully across Government to ensure disabled people are not disadvantaged in a way and is a model that could be replicated to ensure that older people are treated similarly and fairly, including those in the Blackpool area. The Equalities Minister also has cross-government responsibilities for strategy and legislation.

The gap between the remit of the Health and Pensions Ministers needs to be addressed to deal with the unprecedented demographic change that underpins the transformation of the economy, training, work and social care.

The Council therefore requests the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, outlining the Council's view that such a role is required.'

Members then went on to debate the motion.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.15 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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