

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - MONDAY, 20 JULY 2020

Present:

Councillor Cross (in the Chair)

Councillors

Baker	D Coleman	Hutton	Mrs Scott
Benson	G Coleman	Jackson	R Scott
Blackburn	Collett	Kirkland	Smith
Brookes	Cox	Matthews	Stansfield
Burdess	Critchley	Mitchell	I Taylor
Cain	Farrell	O'Hara	Walsh
Callow	Galley	Owen	L Williams
Mrs Callow JP	Hobson	Robertson BEM	T Williams
Campbell	Hugo	Roberts	Wilshaw
Clapham	Hunter	D Scott	Wing

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

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

Councillors Campbell, Farrell and Roberts declared prejudicial interests in agenda item 7 'Public Representatives – Petitions Scheme' as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Airport Operations Limited. Accordingly they took no part in the decision and left the room when the matter was discussed.

Councillor Clapham declared a personal interest in agenda item 8(b) Executive Member Report – People Portfolios as the Vice-Chair of Blackpool Sixth Form College.

The following declarations were made in respect of in agenda item 14b 'Notice of Motion – Aerospace Industry':

- Councillors Campbell, Farrell and Roberts: personal interests as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Airport Operations Limited
- Councillors Clapham and Hutton: personal interest as both had family member who were employees of BAE Systems
- Councillors Baker, Cain, R Scott and Taylor: personal interests as former employees of BAE Systems.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 May 2020, be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

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3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced the following to Council members:

Alderman and former councillor Brian Doherty

‘This Council was deeply saddened to learn of the death on 7 July of Alderman and former Councillor Brian Doherty and his wife, Evelyn ‘Dot’ who had sadly passed away on 5 July.

Brian was first elected in 2000 and during his 15 years as a Councillor proudly served the Park ward and was a keen supporter of the Horan Shukokai Karate Club.

He served on a variety of committees including the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, the Development Control Committee and the Employment and Appeals Committee as well as various scrutiny committees. He was also a director of the Blackpool Coastal Housing Board from 2015 to 2018 and as a social housing tenant provided a valuable contribution.

Our condolences go out to his family and friends’.

Mr Tony Mozley

‘This Council was deeply saddened to learn of the death on 25 May 2020 of Mr Tony Mozley, a former Independent Person for both Blackpool Council and Fylde Borough Council.

Mr Mozley started on the Independent Remuneration Panel in 2005, before becoming an Independent Person for Standards in 2012. For those people who had the privilege of working with Tony said he was the ultimate professional, always acting with integrity and honesty.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife Ann and children, Louise and Joe’.

Members were also asked to give thoughts to those councillors who had also lost loved ones in recent times and Council observed a minute’s silence as a mark of respect to all.

4 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

It was proposed by the Mayor, Councillor Cross, seconded by Councillor L Williams and

Resolved: That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Paula Burdess be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool, for the remainder of the municipal year 2020/2021.

Councillor Burdess spoke about her forthcoming role and made a Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Deputy Mayor according to the requirements of the law.

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5 APPOINTMENT OF LEADER

Motion: Councillor Taylor proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

‘That Councillor L Williams be appointed Leader of the Council, for the remainder of the term of office until the Annual Council meeting in 2023, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007’.

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

6 AMENDMENT TO PROCEDURE STANDING ORDER 10 - EXECUTIVE REPORTS TO COUNCIL

The Council considered a report on proposed changes to Procedural Rule 10 following changes to the composition of the Executive and reporting lines to one Deputy Leader.

Motion: Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘To agree the changes to the attached format of submitting Executive report to Council, adopt the revised wording to Procedural Standing Order 10 (under Part 4a of the Constitution - Procedural Standing Orders for Council and Committees), as set out in Appendix 6(a) to the Council report and for that change to be with immediate effect.

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

7 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS - PETITIONS SCHEME

It was reported that in accordance with the Council’s Petition Scheme, the Petitions Officer had received a petition that qualified for report to and debate at Council, in relation to Blackpool Airport and proposed restoration of commercial flights.

The petition organiser, Mr Scott Benton MP, addressed Council members with regards to the petition statement and representations from residents.

Following the address by Mr Benton MP, Council considered the petition statement.

Motion: Councillor Taylor proposed (and Councillor Hutton seconded):

‘That the Council does not support the petition to reopen Blackpool Airport for commercial passenger flights at this time’.

Members went on to debate the motion and a range of views were expressed.

Motion carried: Following the debate, the motion was carried.

8 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Executive Lead Members for the meeting presented reports to the Council on work undertaken in the Corporate, Place and People portfolio areas. The reports covered corporate, strategic and policy issues, together with work being undertaken in transforming services and with partners.

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

Notes:

1. Councillor Taylor agreed to provide a response to:
 - Councillor Walsh on whether further details could be provided detailing the gender, ethnicity and any underlying health issues of the 129 residents that had sadly died from COVID-19
 - Councillor Clapham to his suggestion that all contracts should be awarded to northern-based companies to support the development of the Northern Powerhouse and details of the eight bidders located in the south of the country that had been awarded contracts
 - Councillor R Scott on the details of the three contracts - Janitorial, Cleaning of Pupil Referral Units and Enforcement Agents - and clarification as to why those contracts had not been awarded to local companies.

He also agreed, on behalf of Councillor Campbell, to respond to Councillor G Coleman as to whether residents would receive free access to Blackpool attractions in 2020.

2. Councillor L Williams agreed to provide a response to Councillor T Williams on the breakdown of the £40m Council reserves and whether this had been as a result of receipt of Government grants or income from Council revenue.
3. In response to the reference from Councillor Galley on the timeline for the return of respite provision for home based carers following COVID-19 restrictions easing, Councillor Farrell agreed to provide a response.
4. Councillor Brookes agreed to respond to Councillor Walsh and Councillor T Williams on the extent of the damage caused by antisocial behaviour in bed and breakfast premises used to house the homeless and how the repairs would be funded.
5. Councillor Hobson, in response to Councillor G Coleman, agreed to provide details of those premises that had been issued a Statutory Closure Notice for not adhering to the COVID legislation and his request for whether the premises could be 'named' and 'shamed'. He also agreed to confirm the number of employees within the Environmental Protection Team.

(Note: Councillor Taylor left the meeting following consideration of the above item).

9 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

Members considered the Scrutiny Annual Report, which set out the achievements of scrutiny at the Council during the 2019/2020 Municipal Year and identified areas for improvement going forward.

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Motion: Councillor Mrs Callow proposed (and Councillor Hugo seconded):

‘To note the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/2020’.

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

10 EXECUTIVE/SCRUTINY PROTOCOL

Members considered the endorsement from the Executive from its meeting on 23 March 2020 in relation to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol. The protocol set out the basis for a positive relationship between the Executive and Scrutiny and had been developed by a joint workshop involving member representatives from both areas.

Motion: Councillor Mrs Callow proposed (and Councillor Campbell seconded):

‘To agree the revised Executive/Scrutiny Protocol as part of the Constitution’.

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

11 AUDIT COMMITTEE CO-OPTEE, INDEPENDENT PERSON AND INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBER

The Council considered the appointments to various vacancies namely the co-opted independent member position on Audit Committee, the role of Independent Person as part of the standards process and member of the Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel.

Members were aware that a vacancy had arisen on the Independent Remuneration Panel following the sad death of Mr Tony Mozley, who had also been an Independent Person as part of the Council’s standards framework.

Council members also noted that the term of office of the current two Independent Persons was due to expire in September 2020. It was proposed that as the Government had not yet responded to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on ethical standards in local government, that an extension to the appointments until 30 September 2021 was considered. Members noted that as those positions were jointly appointed with Fylde Council, that Council was considering the same recommendation.

Members also considered the appointment of an appropriately qualified independent co-opted member to serve on the Audit committee, with non-voting rights, to strengthen the assurance and challenge role for that committee. The co-opted member vacancy had arisen as the former co-optee, Ms Yvonne Russell had resigned earlier in the year.

Motion: Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

- ‘1. That the Council expresses its condolences in respect of Mr Tony Mozley, former Independent Person and member of the Independent Remuneration Panel and pays tribute to his dedication to these roles over the previous years.

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2. That the Council expresses its thanks to Ms Yvonne Russell for her role as Independent Audit Committee member.
3. That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to:
 - advertise for the positions of co-opted Independent Member of the Audit Committee, Independent Person and member of the Independent Remuneration Panel using the same recruitment criteria as previously applied
 - liaise with the four Group Leaders after undertaking the recruitment exercise before a final recommendation on appointment is considered by Council.
4. That the Monitoring Officer is given authority to initiate recruitment for these positions should a vacancy arise in the future.
5. That the term of office of the current two Independent Persons (Mr Brian Horrocks and Mrs Helen Broughton) is extended until 30 September 2021 (a similar recommendation is being considered by Fylde Council)'.

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

12 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Members considered the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel meeting on 2 July in relation to consideration of an allowance for the elected member representative on the Fostering Panel.

Motion: Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

- '1. That a special responsibility allowance of £90 per meeting attended of the Fostering Panel should be paid to the elected member representative from the 11th May 2020, with future uplifts to be in line with the rate paid to the independent member representatives and that the allowance be paid as an allowed second allowance.
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to update the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly'.

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

13 COVID - 19 - REVIEW OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DELEGATION

Members considered a review of the delegated powers that had been assigned to the Chief Executive at the last meeting of Council on 11 May 2020, for the purpose of acting swiftly and flexibly to urgent matters relating to the pandemic.

Motion: Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

- '1. To rescind the delegation to the Chief Executive agreed at the Special Meeting of Council on 11 May 2020, as in line with that approval, the delegation is no longer required to respond to the situation.

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2. To help manage future major incidents, the Constitution be amended to allow the Chief Executive (or in his absence a nominated deputy) to be given delegated authority to exercise any urgent Council decision where, in the opinion of the Chief Executive (or in his absence the nominated deputy), by reason of limitation of time or urgency, a decision is required on any matter relating to a major incident. Any decisions taken in this manner shall be reported to the next meeting of Council for information.
3. That the delegation at 2.2, should it be activated to also include delegated powers to act outside of the Forward Plan, the budget and policy frameworks and the Contracts Procedure Rules, should the need arise where such decisions are required urgently in relation to the major incident, following consultation with each of the Group Leaders and the relevant Cabinet Member.
4. That the delegated authority at 2.2 and 2.3 be activated only after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the other Group Leaders and the Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and the delegated authority be temporary, proportionate to the threat, only to be used when strictly necessary and be in place for as long as required to respond to the situation.
5. To agree that should such a delegation be activated in the future, then periodic briefings be held between the Chief Executive, his extended Management Team, the four Group Leaders and the two Members of Parliament.
6. To request that the Monitoring Officer update the Constitution accordingly'.

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

14 THE LOCAL ELECTRICITY BILL

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor Hobson proposed (and Councillor Hugo seconded):

'Having declared a climate emergency, Blackpool Council needs to look at innovative ways forward of not only reducing its carbon footprint, but also how the Council can effectively reduce carbon generation, for instance through green local energy generation. The Local Electricity Bill was introduced to Parliament on 10 June 2020 and would enable small community groups and organisations to be able to commercially produce local, green electricity.

It was unopposed in Parliament and introduced without a vote. Should it now pass into law, it will allow consumers to purchase energy from local groups and not just nationally licensed utilities. As such, the new 'Right to Local Supply' for energy will allow communities to sell locally generated electricity directly to local households and businesses. It has already gained support from Members of Parliament across all major political parties.

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Therefore, Council resolves to:

- (i) acknowledge this Council's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;
- (ii) recognise that local authorities can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, including the possible provision of locally generated renewable electricity;
- (iii) further recognise
 - that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
 - that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for small scale generators (including local authorities) to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and
- (iv) support the reintroduction of the Local Electricity Bill and promote it to become law, which would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply;
- (v) write to the Member of Parliament for Blackpool South Constituency, asking him to support the Bill noting that the Member of Parliament for Blackpool North has already offered his support; and
- (vi) write to The Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth stating:

'Community-scale renewable energy offers huge potential to accelerate the low-carbon transition but in the UK, it is being blocked by wildly disproportionate costs and unfair regulations.

'Power for People' is campaigning for The Local Electricity Bill which, if made law, would empower community energy groups to start up and sell their clean electricity to local people.

More of the revenues kept locally would mean more investment in local services, more energy security, more local skilled jobs and a boost for clean energy generation across the UK.

Blackpool Council fully supports the Local Electricity Bill in order to deliver cleaner, local energy that benefits our local communities'.

Members then went on to debate the motion.

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

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15 AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor Hunter proposed (and Councillor Critchley seconded):

‘Blackpool Council is deeply concerned that presently there is no Government assistance package for the aerospace industry to enable it to survive the coronavirus crises.

This area like so many others throughout the country relies heavily on the aerospace industry as both a source of primary and secondary employment.

The aerospace industry creates highly skilled jobs for both the present and future generations and the survival of this industry is therefore vital. UK Ministers should therefore stop dragging their feet on a support package for the aerospace industry.

Governments in France, Germany and Spain have all taken steps to secure the future of their aerospace and aviation industries but nothing similar has as yet been forthcoming from the UK government.

This delay is putting jobs at risk, indeed thousands of UK Workers in the sector have already lost their jobs.

The UK aerospace industry is world leading. We are known throughout the world for our engineering skills and products but without Government support in getting through the pandemic we will lose this incredible expertise.

Employers like Airbus are already saying that the swift and comprehensive action by the French Government to protect its aerospace industry makes France an attractive option for business.

Every day of delay by the UK Government puts UK jobs at risk.

This Council therefore resolves that the Chief Executive Officer makes representations with the appropriate Government Ministers urging the UK to implement a support package for the Aerospace and Aviation industry without delay’.

Members then went on to debate the motion.

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

16 ANTI-RACISM

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Burdess seconded):

‘Council notes with deep concern the death of George Floyd in the United States and the demonstrations that followed against the police and state brutality towards black people in America and around the world, including the United Kingdom. Council is mindful of the systemic and institutional racism that exists within society and the rise in racial tensions it can provoke.

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Council further notes the peaceful Black lives matter demonstrations which took place in the Borough and Lytham.

Council resolves:

- To confirm support for the anti-racist aims of Black Lives Matter and other anti-racism campaigns
- To reconfirm its commitment to eliminate discrimination of any kind
- To acknowledge its responsibility to work with our BAME community
- To lead by example in tackling the issues of racism proactively by celebrating and embracing difference and diversity and to ensure that Blackpool is a fair and tolerant place to live and visit'.

Members then went on to debate the motion.

Prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the motion should be recorded. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Baker, Benson, Blackburn, Brookes, Burdess, Cain, Mrs Callow, Callow, Campbell, Clapham, D Coleman, G Coleman, Collett, Cox, Critchley, Cross, Farrell, Galley, Hobson, Hugo, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Kirkland, Matthews, Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Roberts, D Scott, Mrs Scott, R Scott, Smith, Stansfield, Taylor, Walsh, L Williams, T Williams, Wilshaw, Wing – total 40.

Against the motion: None

Abstentions: None

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

17 CCTV

Motion: Having submitted notice, Councillor G Coleman proposed (and Councillor D Coleman seconded):

'The Council believes that all Blackpool Council sports centres, public buildings and parks (and associated car parks) should have comprehensive, operating, CCTV coverage.

The CCTV provision should be fully operational at all times and offer complete coverage of council locations (where legally allowed), to which the public have access, in order to offer protection to residents, council staff and visitors alike.

The Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to instigate a review of CCTV camera provision at council sports centres, public buildings and parks (and associated car parks).

On completion of the review the Council requests that operating CCTV cameras are positioned so as to cover any areas where the review finds that provision of CCTV coverage is currently lacking'.

Members then went on to debate the motion.

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Prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the motion should be recorded. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Baker, Clapham, D Coleman, G Coleman, Cox, Galley, Roberts, Robertson, D Scott, Mrs Scott, R Scott, Stansfield, Walsh, T Williams, Wilshaw, Wing - total 16.

Against the motion: Councillors Benson, Blackburn, Brookes, Burdess, Cain, Campbell, Collett, Critchley, Cross, Farrell, Hobson, Hugo, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Kirkland, Matthews, Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Smith, L Williams – total 22.

Abstentions: None

Motion lost: The motion was therefore lost.

(Note: Councillors Mrs Callow and Callow left the meeting during consideration of the above item).

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 10.12 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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