

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

Present:

Councillor Haynes (in the Chair)

Councillors

Benson	Cox	Jackson	Ryan
Brown	Cross	Mrs Jackson	Smith
Cain	Doherty	Jones	Stansfield
Callow	Elmes	Lee	I Taylor
Mrs Callow JP	Evans	Matthews	Mrs Taylor
Campbell	Galley	H Mitchell	Williams
D Coleman	Green	M Mitchell	Wright
G Coleman	Mrs Henderson MBE	O'Hara	
I Coleman	Hunter	Owen	
Collett	Hutton	Rowson	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive
John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Alan Cavill, Director of Place
Delyth Curtis, Director of People
Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
Karen Smith, Director of Adult Services
Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services / Monitoring Officer
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance
Chris Williams, Democratic Services Adviser
Joe Robinson, Communications Officer

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Blackburn who was on official Council business.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made under the item.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 25TH JUNE 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council held on 25th June 2014 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Luke Taylor to the meeting, following the recent by-election in Clifton ward.

Members were informed that Mayor had received a letter from Councillor Stanley Cain JP, Mayor of Douglas Borough Council, who had extended his wishes and had offered a plaque to be displayed in the Mayor's Parlour.

The Mayor expressed her thanks to Visit Blackpool staff and to Councillor Graham Cain for the work undertaken in relation to the recent Switch-On of the Illuminations evening.

4 MINUTE'S SILENCE

Councillors observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to former Councillor Tony Lee who sadly died on 20 July 2014.

5 COUNCILLOR TONY LEE

Following the sad loss of Councillor Lee, the Council was invited to pay tribute to his life and work and consider a resolution of condolence.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Evans seconded):

'This Council and the people of Blackpool were deeply saddened to learn of the death on Sunday 20th July 2014 of Councillor Tony Lee, former Deputy Mayor in 2010/ 2011 and member for Waterloo Ward.

Tony was a proud 'sandgrown 'un', - born and bred in Blackpool. He was baptised at Holy Trinity Church and attended Hawes Side Primary School and Highfield Secondary School.

Tony, together with his wife Eileen, owned a care home for 25 years. He maintained a particular interest around the welfare of old people and when he became a Councillor in 2007, he was designated the Council's 'Older People's Champion'. He was also involved in visiting residential homes on behalf of the Council, to help ensure that the needs of older people are being met.

He was widely regarded as a 'people person' and was very committed to his ward. He served on a number of Council Committees over the years. Latterly he served on the Scrutiny Committee, Planning Committee and the Licensing Committee and became an experienced and valued member of those committees. He was the Scrutiny Lead/ Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing, Public Safety and Enforcement and Street Scene and the Environment.

Tony suddenly was diagnosed with cancer shortly before he passed away whilst on holiday in France and this came as a great shock to all who knew him.

Tony leaves his widow Eileen, children Damian, Anthony, Gemma and Philip and four grandchildren.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Eileen and her family in their great loss.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried unanimously.

(Note: Councillor H Mitchell left the meeting following consideration of the item).

6 EXECUTIVE REPORTS AND OUTSIDE BODY REPORTS

Cabinet Members and Combined Fire Authority representatives presented reports to the Council on work undertaken within their portfolio areas. Councillor Jackson presented the report on behalf of the Leader of the Council. All the reports covered decisions taken, work in progress and work to be undertaken in the near future. Questions, comments and debate were invited from all councillors on each of the report areas.

Notes:

(1) On behalf of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jackson agreed to provide Councillor Mrs Callow with a written response as to how the remaining loss from the 2013 Switch On event would be recovered and whether there would be any staff redundancies as a consequence. In reference to a recent Executive decision to write off debt in excess of £12,000, he also agreed to provide clarification for Councillor Mrs Callow as to the reason why the debt was not pursued and prosecutions made.

Councillor Jackson also agreed for a response on behalf of the Leader to be provided to Councillor Galley, with details of the amount that had been borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board and whether the amount had increased.

(2) In relation to Councillor Green's reference to the Flood and Waste Management Act 2010, Councillor Jackson agreed to provide a written answer as to whether applications had been made to the Planning Department from residents wishing to pave over grassed garden areas. He also agreed to clarify the proportion of the £575,000 of unsecured loans obtained through the Government Start Up scheme, that had been lost to bad debt when businesses failed.

Councillor Jackson agreed to clarify for Councillor Williams the application and decision making process regarding the capital grant to the Tangerine Confectionary company. He also agreed to provide a response as to the reason for the occupancy numbers of the Enterprise Centre, Lytham Road, and plans to fully utilise the space were being progressed.

(3) Councillor Jones agreed to provide a written response to Councillor Williams on the occupancy rates for all of the Council owned car parks. He also agreed to confirm the number of cycles from the Cycle Blackpool scheme that had been stolen, repaired or sold and for details of the plans to replace cycles.

(4) Councillor Cox left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

(5) Councillor Jackson declared a personal interest in agenda item 6a, Executive Report from the Leader of the Council as a member of Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Credit Union.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

7 REVENUE BUDGET 2014/ 2015

Members considered the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 8th September 2014, in relation to proposed amendments to the Revenue Budget for 2014/2015. The amendments related to proposals for meeting the imbalance of £1,016,000 from the current Revenue Budget through the transfer of £852,000 from the earmarked reserve for Potential Pay Liabilities as an alternative to the pay freeze that had originally been proposed. It was also recommended that the remaining balance of £164,000 would be met from Contingencies.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor Rowson seconded):

‘1. To agree that the in-year budget gap identified in paragraph 5.1 of the Council report, be met by transferring £852,000 from the Earmarked Reserve for Potential Pay Liabilities and the balance of £164,000 from Contingencies.

2. To agree the budget commitments regarding the Better Start fund, as set out in the Executive decision notice at Appendix 7(b) to the Council report and amend the Council’s Revenue budget to include these sums.’

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

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

8 OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Council considered the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 8th September 2014 regarding a proposed Officer Code of Conduct to be included in the Council’s Constitution. It was reported that in drafting the revised Code, consultation had taken place with recognised trade unions and key Council services.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor Williams seconded):

‘To approve the Officer Code of conduct as submitted and agree that it be added to the Council’s Constitution.’

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

9 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Members were aware that at the June Council meeting, it had been agreed that a review of the political balance calculations and their effect on committees would be required following the Clifton by-election in July 2014.

The Council considered proposals for political balance calculations which took into account the election of Councillor Luke Taylor and the sad death of Councillor Tony Lee.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor Williams seconded):

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

'1. To re-appoint the following Committees, in line with the political balance calculations and adjustments at Appendix 9(a) to the Council report. These are:

- Scrutiny Committee (membership of fourteen and with a composition of ten Labour and four Conservative)
- Health Scrutiny Committee (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative)
- Planning Committee (membership of ten and with a composition of seven Labour and three Conservative)
- Appeals Committee (membership of six and with a composition of four Labour and two Conservative)
- Finance and Audit Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative).
- Standards Committee (membership of six and with a composition of four Labour and two Conservative).
- Chief Officers Employment Committee (membership of five and with a composition of four Labour and one Conservative).

2. To agree that the powers and duties of those Committees remain as set out in the Constitution.

3. That the Scrutiny Committee be requested to appoint a 'Call In' Sub Committee, (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative), to meet as and when required, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution.

4. To note that the Licensing Committee and the Public Protection Sub Committee do not need to be re-appointed as the political balance calculations do not change.

5. To note the appointment of members to Committees as set out in Appendix 9(b) to the Council report.

6. To confirm the re-appointment of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for those Committees and the six Scrutiny Lead Members identified at Appendix 9(b) to the Council report based on the above recommendations.

7. To agree that the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly and report back to Council on revised political balance calculations at the November meeting following the Waterloo By Election.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

10 STATUTORY POSITIONS

Members noted that at the Chief Officer's Employment Committee on 4th July 2014, it had been agreed for the Chief Executive to make interim designations to the positions of statutory Director of Children's Services and statutory Director of Adult services, both of which required Council approval.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

Members were also aware that the current Head of Legal Services was due to leave the Council from 18th September 2014 and that duties within the Constitution would therefore needed to be allocated.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor I Taylor seconded):

- '1. To confirm that on an interim basis for a period up to 30th September 2015, Delyth Curtis be designated as the statutory Director of Children's Services.
2. To confirm that on an interim basis for a period up to 30th September 2015, Karen Smith be designated as the statutory Director of Adult Services.
3. To confirm that the current duties in the Constitution designated to the Head of Legal Services be assigned to Carmel White, the Chief Corporate Solicitor and that the deputy role be assigned to Gemma Duxbury, the Senior Solicitor (Corporate).
4. To agree that the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be authorised to update the Constitution accordingly.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

11 TOWN PLANNING

Motion: Pursuant to notice, Councillor Owen proposed (and Councillor Mrs Jackson seconded):

'That this Council urges the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to set up an inquiry in association with the Local Government Association and the Town and Country Planning Association to ascertain the effect that recent amendments to the country's system for managing town planning have had on local communities, and to recommend further change appropriate to the outcome of that inquiry.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

12 WORKFARE SCHEME

Motion: Pursuant to notice, Councillor M Mitchell proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

'Blackpool Council believes that work should be a paid activity and therefore opposes the introduction of schemes, which force job seekers to carry out unpaid work or face losing benefits - schemes known popularly as 'workfare'. The Council is concerned that there is no evidence 'workfare' assists job seekers in finding real jobs and that in fact working for thirty hours a week unpaid, makes that more difficult. It believes that 'workfare' is replacing paid work and that 'workfare' stigmatises benefit claimants and locks them further into poverty. This Council therefore pledges not to use any 'workfare' placements and also encourages contractors not to use these schemes.'

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

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

For the motion: Councillors Benson, Cain, Campbell, D Coleman, G Coleman, I Coleman, Collett, Cross, Doherty, Elmes, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Mrs Jackson, Jones, Matthews, M Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Rowson, Ryan, Smith, I Taylor, L Taylor, Mrs Taylor, Wright - **total 26.**

Against the motion: Councillors Brown, Evans, Galley, Mrs Henderson, Stansfield, Williams - **total 6.**

Abstentions: Councillors Green, Mrs Haynes - **total 2.**

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.41 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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