

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2022

Present:

Councillor Benson (in the Chair)

Councillors

Baker	Critchley	Matthews	R Scott
Blackburn	Cross	B Mitchell	Sloman
Burdess	Farrell	M Mitchell	Stansfield
Mrs Callow JP	Galley	O'Hara	Taylor
Campbell	Hobson	Owen	Walsh
Clapham	Hugo	Robertson BEM	T Williams
D Coleman	Hunter	Roberts	Wilshaw
G Coleman	Jackson	D Scott	Wright
Cox	Kirkland	Mrs Scott	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

Steve Thompson, Director of Resources

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

Jenni Cook, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 September 2022 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed the new Council member, Councillor Peter Wright, to the meeting.

On behalf of the Council the Mayor congratulated Blackpool Transport Services Limited on being awarded Bus Operator of the Year at the recent UK Bus Awards.

The positive publicity for the resort gained as a result of Strictly Come Dancing's recent broadcast from the Blackpool Tower Ballroom was praised by the Mayor who expressed the Council's hope that the programme would return to the resort in 2023.

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4 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Council received reports from the Executive Lead Members 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.

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

Notes:

1. Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader of the Council, agreed to provide written responses to:
 - Councillor Clapham with details of any ongoing Council projects which had been affected by external budget pressures and were overspent against the original budget as a result of those rising costs;
 - Councillor Galley on whether there were any plans to submit a new funding bid to create a "People's Promenade" integrated event space;
 - Councillor Galley regarding the Foxhall Village development project and what the alternative options were for the west site if completion of the scheme was delayed / unviable;
 - Councillor M Scott to provide assurance that all housing provided and managed by the Council was fit for purpose and free of damp and mould, and that enforcement was supporting private tenants to ensure their landlords were also providing damp and mould free homes.
2. In relation to a question regarding Lancashire 2050 the Chief Executive agreed to respond to Councillor Galley directly as to what the delivery framework would be and what role elected members would have in the project.
3. Councillor Hugo agreed to:
 - Provide Councillor R Scott with details of the Planned Preventative Maintenance regime for the drainage system and to respond to his suggestion that contractors involved in the installation of 5G masts were requested to organise for the drains to be cleared of rubble and debris following completion of the work;
 - Provide a written response to Councillor Stansfield as to when the weeds in Stanley Park Lake would be cleared in order that the whole lake was made useable again.
4. In response to a question from Councillor T Williams, who referred to the large number of bollards on Edward Street and a lack of trees, Councillor Hugo agreed to ask Councillor Smith to provide a written response with an update on the Council's "Quality Corridors" programme.
5. In relation to comments from Councillor M Mitchell regarding the closure of the Art B&B it was agreed that Councillor L Williams, Leader of the Council, would provide a written response as to what had led to the failure of the business and whether there had been any strategic oversight from the Council which had provided funding for the project.

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6. In response to comments from Councillor Sloman regarding the demand on the Council from the number of “out of area” looked after children in care in Blackpool, Councillor Hobson agreed to confirm with the Director of Children’s Services as to whether other authorities had been written to, to request that children from their areas were not placed in Blackpool as it was unable to meet their needs and to respond accordingly.
7. Councillor Cox left the meeting following the presentation of the Corporate Portfolio report.
8. Councillor Cross left the meeting during the presentation of the People Portfolio report.
9. Members of the Council agreed a short adjournment for ten minutes following the presentation of the Executive Member reports.
10. Councillor Kirkland left the meeting during the adjournment.

5 POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW

Members considered a review of polling districts and polling places under the new ward boundaries that were due to come into force at the local elections in May 2023 and noted that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England proposals on warding patterns were still subject to parliamentary approval.

The report set out details on the consultation exercise that had taken place with councillors and other stakeholders on the proposed polling districts and places. Debate took place on the report and a number of views were expressed during which it was noted that the report’s proposals included delegated authority for the Returning Officer to determine any further changes where necessary.

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

- ‘1. To approve the polling districts and polling places as set out in the appendices of the report subject to parliamentary approval of the warding arrangements.
2. To delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make further changes to polling places/polling stations that may be necessary before the elections on 4 May 2023.’

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

6 REVISED POLITICAL BALANCE AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Members considered proposals in relation to the re-appointment of its committees as a result of changes to the political make-up following the by-election.

Motion: Councillor Taylor proposed (and Councillor Hugo seconded) the following motion:

- ‘1. To re-appoint the following Council committees, with powers and duties as set out in the Council’s Constitution:

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- Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee
 - Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee
 - Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
 - Audit Committee
 - Appeals Committee
 - Planning Committee
 - Standards Committee
 - Chief Officers Employment Committee
2. To re-appoint a Scrutiny Leadership Board, with the powers set out in the Council's constitution and for the Board to continue to have an adjusted political balance membership of three Labour, four Conservative (to be made up of the Chairs, Vice Chairs of the three Scrutiny Committees and the Chair of the Audit Committee).
 3. To continue the inclusion of the non-aligned member Councillor Mrs Callow to the Board and to also appoint her as Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board.
 4. To agree the revised political balance attached at Appendix 6(a) to the Council report and appointments to the above committees at Appendix 6(b).
 5. To re-appoint the Licensing Committee with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution (equating to a revised membership figure of 13 and a composition of seven Labour, five Conservative and one Blackpool Independent).
 6. To request the Licensing Committee to re-appoint the Public Protection Sub-Committee, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution including the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
 7. To agree that any membership changes to committees or sub-committees during the remainder of the Municipal Year be reported to the Director of Governance and Partnerships by the relevant Group Leader for implementation.
 8. To agree to the memberships of the committees of the Council and their Chairs and Vice Chairs as set out in Appendix 6(b) to the Council report.
 9. To note that a best practice review of the scrutiny arrangements is to be conducted and to request that the matter of scrutiny chairs forms part of that review.
 10. To note the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board, as this is unaffected by political balance arrangements.
 11. To agree that the Director of Governance and Partnerships be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly.'

Amendment: Councillor T Williams then proposed (and Councillor Clapham seconded) the following amendment with regard to recommendation 8:

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'To agree to the memberships of the committees of the Council and their Chairs and Vice Chairs as set out in Appendix 6(b) of the report except for the appointment of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Tourism, Economy and Communities, the Adult Social Care and Health and Children and Young People Scrutiny Committees, with these positions to appointed as follows:

Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Cllr G Walsh (Conservative), Vice Chair: Cllr F Jackson (Labour)

Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Cllr M Scott (Conservative), Vice Chair: Cllr K Critchley (Labour)

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Chair: Cllr A Stansfield (Conservative), Vice Chair: Cllr P Burdess (Labour)'

Discussion then took place on the amendment and a range of views were expressed in relation to the proposals.

Amendment carried: The amendment was submitted to the Council and carried.

Debate then took place on the substantive motion with members speaking for and against the proposals.

Substantive motion carried: The substantive motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

7 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Members considered the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the review of the uprate to the Members' Allowances Scheme and payment of certain special responsibility allowances.

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

1. To approve the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out in paragraph 7 at Appendix 7(a) to the Council report.
2. That the Director of Governance and Partnerships be authorised to update the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly.'

The motion was submitted to the Council and declared as lost.

Note:

Following the meeting a procedural error was identified whereby, although a majority vote in favour of approving the report had been reached, the Mayor was advised that the vote had been lost and declared the resolution to that effect. In the interests of openness and transparency, the item will be resubmitted for consideration to the next Council meeting in view of the error.

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8 SCRUTINY UPDATE REPORT

Members considered the report from the Scrutiny Lead Member in relation to scrutiny activity undertaken in the 2022/2023 Municipal Year. Members acknowledged the work of the scrutiny committees and the number of scrutiny reviews undertaken in the year to date which were due to be concluded before the start of the pre-election period ready for the new Committees to develop their workplans in the next Municipal Year.

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

‘To note the scrutiny activity undertaken in the 2022/23 Municipal Year to date’.

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

Note: Councillor Blackburn left the meeting following consideration of the item.

9 HEALTH OF THE OCEAN - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE TOURISM, ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members considered the recommendation from the Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee to declare that an urgent need for ocean recovery was adopted by the Council.

Motion: Councillor Hugo proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded) that:

‘This Council declares an urgent need for Ocean Recovery:

The Council recognises that ocean recovery is needed to meet the Council’s net zero carbon targets, and net zero carbon is required to recover the ocean.

This Council pledges to:

1. Report to Full Council within 12 months on the actions and projects that will begin an ocean recovery in Blackpool.
2. Embed ocean recovery in all strategic decisions, budgets, procurement and approaches to decisions by the Council (particularly in planning, regeneration, skills and economic policy), aligning with climate change mitigation and adaptation requirements, and considering ocean-based solutions in the Council’s journey towards a carbon neutral and climate resilient future.
3. Ensure that local planning supports ocean recovery, working closely with the Marine Management Organisation to embed strong links between the Local Plan and the Blackpool Marine Plan to support ocean recovery.
4. Ensure that the Blackpool Blue Green Strategy strives to support ocean recovery.
5. Work with partners locally and nationally including the Council’s continued involvement with the Turning Tides Partnership to deliver increased sustainability in local marine industries and develop a sustainable and equitable blue economy that delivers ocean recovery and local prosperity, including the local fishing industry and the vital work of IFCA in the North West.

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6. Grow ocean literacy and marine citizenship in the Blackpool area, including ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to have a first-hand experience of the ocean before leaving primary school - striving to include home-schooled children - and promote sustainable and equitable access to the ocean through physical and digital experiences for all residents.
7. Create an online portal on the Council website to update on ocean recovery progress, signpost to ocean literacy development opportunities, and marine citizenship pledges.
8. Write to the Government to put the ocean into net recovery by 2030 by:
 - a) Working with coastal communities to co-develop marine policy to ensure it delivers equitable and sustainable outcomes in local place making.
 - b) Appointing a dedicated Minister for Coastal Communities.
 - c) Stopping plastic pollution at source by strengthening the regulations around single-use plastics and set standards for microfibre-catching filters to ensure that all new domestic and commercial washing machines are fitted with a filter that captures a high percentage of microfibres produced in the wash cycle.
 - d) Listening to marine and social scientific advice to update the Marine Policy Statement and produce a national Ocean Recovery Strategy which will:
 - i. Enable the recovery of marine ecosystems rather than managing degraded or altered habitats in their reduced state.
 - ii. Consider levelling up, marine conservation, energy, industrial growth, flood and coastal erosion risk management, climate adaptation and fisheries policy holistically rather than as competing interests.
 - iii. Develop a smarter approach to managing the health of the entire ocean that moves beyond Marine Protected Areas and enables links to be made across sectors towards sustainability.
 - iv. Establish improved processes for understanding the benefits of ocean recovery, leaving no doubt the links between this and human lives, livelihoods, and wellbeing.'

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

10 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Members considered a review of the Council's Constitution, in relation to amendments to the Articles of the Council and the Procedural Standing Orders for Council and Committee meetings.

The Council noted the duty of the Monitoring Officer to periodically monitor and review the operation of the Constitution and that an informal cross-party working group had been formed to assist with the review.

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

- '1. To agree to the proposed amendments to the Constitution for the Articles of the Constitution at Appendix 10(a) to the Council report and the Procedural Standing Orders for Council and Committees at Appendix 10(b).

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2. To note that a briefing session had been held on Monday 28 November 2022 which explained the changes put forward by the Monitoring Officer and the Working Group'.

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

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.07 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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