

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2023

Present:

Councillor Benson (in the Chair)

Councillors

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

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships/ Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Jenni Cook, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

Jenny Bollington, Media Manager

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Baker, Burdess, Critchley, Cross, Hutton, Smith and Taylor declared personal interests in agenda item 8 Council Tax Reduction Scheme as they were in receipt of Council Tax reduction.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 30 November 2022 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3 RESOLUTION OF CONDOLENCE AND MINUTE'S SILENCE

The Council noted the sad death of former councillor Derek Courtney who had represented Layton and Park wards. Councillors Taylor, Owen and Jackson paid tribute to his work and term of office.

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Members also noted that former Blackpool and Fylde Coroner Anne Hind had passed away and Councillor L Williams spoke in tribute.

The following resolution of condolence was then moved:

‘The Council sends its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of former Councillor Derek Courtney and former Coroner Anne Hind for their loss and places on record its recognition of their dedication to office’.

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

Council then held a minute’s silence as a mark of respect.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Mayor.

On the invitation of the Mayor, the Leader of the Council made an apology in relation to a matter at the September Council meeting.

5 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

Mr Ian White addressed the Council on the current issues affecting the short stay accommodation sector and in particular the pressures facing traditional bed and breakfast accommodation as a result of the increase in new accommodation.

Councillor L Williams, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Tourism, Arts and Culture responded to Mr White on the matter.

6 EXECUTIVE REPORTS AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY 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.

Members also received a report from representatives of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority in relation to the work being undertaken by the authority.

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

Note 1: Councillor L Williams, Leader of the Council, advised that she would provide a written response to Councillor Sloman on the availability of bus services from the north of the town to Victoria Hospital and whether consideration could be given to increasing services/routes as well as provision in the budget for reduced travel costs for hospital staff in the future.

Note 2: The Leader in response to questions from Councillor M Mitchell stated that if he

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had further queries in relation to Stanley Park Golf Course to let her know, for her to respond in writing.

7 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Members noted that a procedural error had occurred at the last Council meeting in relation to the item.

The Council therefore resolved that in the circumstances, the item should be reconsidered and a new vote taken.

Members went on to discuss the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel and in doing so expressed a range of views on the recommendations in relation to the uprate of the scheme and proposals in relation to special responsibility allowance payments.

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

- '1. To agree the recommendations contained within the Independent Remuneration Panel report namely:
 - i. That a 4.04% uprate is applied to the basic allowance, special responsibility allowances (with the exception of those set out in paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 of the Panel's report) and travel/subsistence allowances for members for financial year 2022/23.
 - ii. That in relation to Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Appeals Committee, Audit Committee, Planning Committee and Public Protection Sub-Committee, the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for these positions can be paid in addition to one other SRA from within the Political management structure as set out in the constitution.
 - iii. In relation to ii. above, that this takes effect from the Annual Meeting 2022 and that the Members' Allowances Scheme is amended to include this provision.
 - iv. That consideration of whether a special responsibility allowance for the Armed Forces Champion would be considered as part of the full four year review.
2. That the Director of Governance and Partnerships be authorised to update the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly'.

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 Benson, Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Collett, Critchley, Cross, Farrell, Hobson, Hugo, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Matthews, O'Hara, Owen, Smith, Taylor, L Williams, Wright – **total 20**.

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Mrs Callow, Clapham, G Coleman, Cox, B Mitchell,

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M Mitchell, Roberts, Robertson, D Scott, M Scott, R Scott, Sloman, Stansfield, Walsh, T Williams, Wilshaw - **total 17**.

Abstentions: Councillor Cain – **total 1**.

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

8 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Council considered the recommendations from the Executive from its meeting on 23 January 2023 regarding proposals for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24.

The report outlined proposals for the percentage reduction to be held at the same level as the previous year along with the calculation methods and to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy.

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

1. To agree the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 8c to the report.
2. To agree that the reduction applied to working age claimants remains the same as the 2022/23 Scheme agreed by Council on 9 February 2022 and that the main elements and method of calculating awards will be the same.
3. To agree to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship as set out at Appendix 8a to the report'.

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

9 LOCAL PLAN

The Council had received a copy of the report in relation to the proposed Blackpool Local Plan Part 2. The Leader proposed that the item should be deferred to the following Council meeting in order to allow further engagement with elected members.

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

'To defer consideration of the item to the next Council meeting'.

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

10 MAYOR ELECT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER

Members noted that each year, the Mayor Elect was usually identified according to length of service. As it was an election year, proposals had been submitted for the decision to agree a Mayor Elect to be delegated to the Director of Governance and Partnerships after consultation with the political group leaders, to allow arrangements to subsequently be

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made for the Annual Meeting on 24 May 2023.

It was also proposed that delegated authority was considered in relation to the appointment of the co-opted independent member to the vacant position on the Audit Committee.

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

- ‘1. To delegate to the Director of Governance and Partnerships, after consultation with the Group Leaders appointed after 4 May 2023, the naming of a Mayor Elect for the Mayoral year 2023/2024 based on the current length of service criteria, to allow arrangements to then be made for the Annual Meeting on 24 May 2023.
2. To delegate to the Director of Governance and Partnerships the appointment of a Co-opted Independent Member to the vacant position on the Audit Committee, following consultation with the Group Leaders’.

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

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

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