

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 15 December 2010 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Wright, Austin, Balmer, P. Blackmore, M. Bradshaw, J. Bradshaw, Browne, Bryant, E. Cargill, Carlin, Dennett, Findon, Fry, A. Gerrard, J. Gerrard, Hignett, Hodge, Hodgkinson, Horabin, Howard, Inch, Leadbetter, M Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, Loftus, J. Lowe, Macmanus, McDermott, McInerney, Morley, Nelson, Nolan, Norddahl, Philbin, Polhill, E. Ratcliffe, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Roberts, Rowe, Stockton, Swain, Thompson, Wainwright, Wallace and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Edge, Harris, A. Lowe, Murray, Osborne and Parker

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Dave Cargill

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, D. Parr, D. Tregoe, G. Meehan and J. Whittaker

Also in attendance: 2 Members of the public

Action

COU49 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 20 October 2010, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings be confirmed and adopted.

COU50 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

1. *Telecare Award* – awarded to Halton Borough Council from the Telecare Service Association. The award recognised the work the service had undertaken in meeting set standards for the industry in relation to service user tailoring (assessment), installation, response and monitoring. The Mayor congratulated Community Alarm Service in receiving the national coveted accreditation with the Telecare Services Association. The accreditation recognised

the Council as an excellent provider of Telecare and Community alarms, and one of only 63 member organisations (of 226 members) in the country to be accredited to the new 2009 Code of Practice. The staff had demonstrated a significant achievement and showed tremendous dedication in achieving the award, and help keeping over 2000 residents safe in their homes. The service was now looking to be accredited to the new European Standard.

2. "Working in Partnership with Halton Housing" Award.
3. Framed photograph of Expo 2010 in China, in which Ashley School participated.
4. Excellent rating for Adult Social Care in Halton.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) visited Halton in September 2010 to find out how well the Council and its partners were delivering adult social care. To do this, the inspection team looked at how well Halton was:

- Safeguarding adults whose circumstances made them vulnerable,
- Improving the health and wellbeing of older people, and
- Increasing choice and control for older people.

In respect of the three areas outlined above CQC concluded that Halton was:-

- performing **excellently** in safeguarding adults;
- performing **well** in supporting improved health and wellbeing of older people; and
- performing **excellently** in supporting increased choice and control for older people.

COU51 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reported on the following issues:

- The Council had been advised that the County Court in Runcorn would be closed in the near future;
- Adult Services had received an excellent rating following a recent inspection;
- Children and Young People had received a performing well rating following a recent

- inspection;
- Safeguarding had received an outstanding rating following a recent inspection;
 - The Audit Commission report had found that the Council was performing well; and
 - The Council's challenge for the coming financial year with Halton's grant settlement being reduced by Central Government by 8.9%. In comparison Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East received grant settlement reductions of 2.96% and 1.63% respectively. Consequently the Council needed to find £20m this year to offset the grant settlement reduction. This was in addition to the loss of Working Neighbourhoods Funding and other additional in year Central Government budget cuts. The Council would continue to try to protect frontline services.

COU52 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board from meetings held on 14 October 2010, 4 November 2010, 18 November 2010 and 2 December 2010.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU53 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board Sub-Committee from meetings held 14 October 2010, 4 November 2010, 18 November 2010 and 2 December 2010.

In seconding the minutes Councillor Nelson reported that every household would have a recycle bin by the end of June 2011.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU54 MINUTES OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board from 18 November 2010.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU55 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

The following questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8 from Councillor Shepherd:

“Due to the policies of the ConDem alliance and the education cuts they have put in place. How will the youth of Halton be affected by these cuts and how will it impact on their ability to engage in further education in this borough. Education in whatever form is the future of this country and any attack on its availability is an attack on the future prospects of this country and should be judged as such.”

In response Councillor Polhill replied that:

“Our recent performance in education has been fantastic, the Council and its schools have achieved unprecedented levels of performance improvement over the past 4 years across all key stages. Standards have been significantly enhanced, with Halton now performing at, or well above, the national average.

The Council has also performed well in reducing NEETs, the numbers of young people not in Education, Employment and Training in Halton has shown a steady decrease over recent years; this is due to a range of targeted investments in education and training opportunities for young people 14-19.

What this Government propose is not good for children and young people in Halton – Why? Because the Coalition Government has announced the ending of a number of grants that will affect the education services the Council has previously provided to schools. Grants relating to School Improvement Services are to end in April 2011. The Council is exploring other viable ways of delivering these services which are the subject of a report to Executive Board (16th November 2010).

The Coalition Government proposes that ‘School Improvement’ should be provided through school to school support, along with a diverse market of providers.

In terms of young people’s access to further education, the Coalition Government is to end the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

The Coalition Government has stated that it plans to replace the EMA with a more targeted support for pupils who face genuine financial barriers to participation?

And a reminder that the EMA in Halton has enabled an

increasing number of young people to take part in Further Education.

What the future now holds is the cuts now imposed by this heartless Coalition Government will have a serious impact on the ability of Halton Council, Halton's schools and Riverside College to continue to deliver improved educational opportunity for children and young people in Halton.

This is a disgrace and every Tory in this Chamber should be ashamed. But not as ashamed as the Lib/Dems who have made all this possible by:

- opting for a place in the Government at the expense of giving up their integrity.

My Christmas message to our Lib/Dems is this

- remember a lap dog is for life not just for Christmas"

COU56 CONTROL OF SEX ESTABLISHMENTS (MINUTE EXB 57 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director, Resources on the adoption of controls relating to sex establishments

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2009 – Control of Sex Establishments be adopted; and
- (2) the consequential amendments to the Council's Constitution as set out in Appendix 2 attached to the report be adopted.

Chief Executive

COU57 LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY (MINUTE EXB 64 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Chief Executive on the adoption of a Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Council had a duty to adopt a Statement of

Licensing Policy by 7 January 2011, which would remain in place for a three year period unless amended before that time.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Statement of Licensing Policy attached to the report be adopted; and
- 2) consideration of the Cumulative Impact Special Policy as proposed by Cheshire Constabulary be deferred.

Chief Executive

COU58 MEMBERSHIP OF OUTSIDE BODIES (MINUTE EXB 71 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director, Resources, which advised them of changes to the membership of Outside Bodies.

The 2010/11 list of Outside Bodies had been approved at Council on 21 July 2010. Since then a review had revealed a number of additional Bodies on which the Council had representation but which did not appear on the approved list. In addition, one re-naming had taken place and two appointments had been amended.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the appointments to the additional Outside Bodies listed in Appendix A attached to the report be approved for the remainder of the 2010/11 municipal year with the amendment of Councillor Thompson as the representative on the Mersey Gateway Environment Trust;
- 2) the re-naming of the North Cheshire Hospital Trust as the Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust be noted and it be confirmed that Councillor Morley be appointed as the Council's representative on that Outside Body; and
- 3) it be noted that Councillor Harris would replace Councillor Marie Wright as the representative on the North West Regional Housing Board and the Liverpool City Region Housing and Spatial Strategy Board.

Chief Executive

COU59 DETERMINATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX BASE 2011/12 - KEY DECISION (MINUTE EXB 69 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance on the requirement for the Council to determine the "Tax Base" for its area and the tax base for each of the Parishes.

The Council was required to notify the figure to the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police Authority and the Environment Agency by 31 January 2011. In addition, the Council was required to calculate and advise, if requested, the Parish Councils of their relevant tax base.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the 2011/12 Council Tax Base be set at 38,200 for the Borough and that the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police Authority and the Environment Agency be so notified; and
- 2) the Council Tax Base for each of the Parishes be set as follows:

Operational
Director Finance

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	733
Halebank	600
Daresbury	147
Moore	343
Preston Brook	345
Sandymoor	973

COU60 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 20 October 2010:-

Children, Young People and Families
Employment, Learning, Skills and Community
Health
Safer
Environment and Urban Renewal
Corporate
Business Efficiency

In receiving the minutes, the following comments were made:

- Councillor Hignett congratulated staff on the excellent traffic reduction collision report; and
- Councillor Carlin commented that an improved business model was required for future development in Runcorn Town Centre.

COU61 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of the Council on 20 October 2010:-

Development Control
Standards
Regulatory
Appeals
Appointments

In receiving the minutes Councillor Philbin thanked members of the Regulatory Committee for their work during the past year, in particular their attendance at the number of special meetings.

COU62 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that the following changes to Board and Committee Membership had been notified in accordance with Standing Order No. 30 (4):-

- Councillor Balmer had replaced Councillor Findon on the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board; and
- Councillor Findon had replaced Councillor Balmer on the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

Meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.