

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 18 July 2012 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors T. McInerney, Baker, M. Bradshaw, J. Bradshaw, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cassidy, Cole, Dennett, Edge, Fry, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, P. Hignett, R. Hignett, S. Hill, V. Hill, Howard, Jones, Lea, M Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, Macmanus, McDermott, A. McInerney, Morley, Nelson, Nolan, Parker, Philbin, Polhill, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Roberts, Rowe, Sinnott, G. Stockton, J. Stockton, Thompson, Wainwright, Wharton, Woolfall, Wright and Zygodlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Fraser, Hodge, Horabin, Osborne, C. Plumpton Walsh and Wallace

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, A. Scott, G. Meehan, D. Parr and P. McWade

Also in attendance: Three members of the public

Action

COU15 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 May 2012, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU16 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that a book had been presented entitled "Explaining Hindu Dharma (Religion) – A Guide for Teachers" by Dr Shiv Pande. Copies of the book would be made available to schools.

COU17 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reported on the following items:

- The first figures from the 2011 Census had been published, showing an approximate 5.48% increase in the Borough's population, the fastest rise in the Merseyside area;
- Halton had been successful in retaining all 12 of its

Green Flag Awards for 2012/2013 as awarded by Keep Britain Tidy;

- Halton had two major successes at the Municipal Journal Local Government Awards recently – The Shared Services arrangements with Cheshire West and Chester Council won the 'Best Shared Service' Award and Halton was Highly Commended in the 'Council of the Year' Award.

(N.B. Councillor Jones and Councillor S Hill declared a personal interest in minute EXB 21, as both were Governors of Wade Deacon High School; Councillor S Hill declared a personal interest in minute EXB 25 as a Governor of Ashley School; Councillor Woolfall declared a personal interest in a related item referred to in the Leader's response on minute EXB 21, on proposals for conversion of a school to Academy Status, as he was the Chair of Governors at The Bankfield School)

COU18 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings from 24 May 2012, 14 June 2012 and 28 June 2012.

In considering the minutes, Councillor McDermott asked the Leader for clarification on the status of the running track at Wade Deacon High School, once the school had converted to an Academy. He was advised that this facility would form part of the School's property once Academy conversion had been completed.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU19 MINUTES OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board meeting from 14 June 2012.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU20 MINUTES OF THE SHADOW HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board meetings from 25 April 2012 and 20 June 2012.

In considering the minutes, Councillor Chris Loftus

asked if the Board would consider looking at a wider range of lifestyle related issues and was advised that the work of the Board was still evolving.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU21 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

It was noted that no minutes had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

COU22 HALTON CORE STRATEGY - POST SUBMISSION CHANGES - KEY DECISION (MINUTE EXB 27 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval to consult on the changes required to be made to the Halton Core Strategy.

Amendments had been incorporated into a revised version of the Core Strategy, following recommendations by the Planning Inspector in January 2012. In addition, the Planning Inspector had requested that a further modification be incorporated concerning the "presumption in favour of sustainable development", which would provide a link between the Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, and which detailed how the presumption would be applied in Halton.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the changes to be made to the Halton Core Strategy, for the purposes of a six week period of public consultation be approved;
- 2) the Operational Director, Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Physical Environment Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make any further minor editorial amendments as required, before the period of public consultation commences; and
- 3) the Core Strategy be brought back to Council later in 2012, for formal adoption as part of the Development Plan for Halton.

COU23 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Council was advised that Standards Committee had met on 17 July 2012, to consider reports on the following

issues:

- Standards Committee Annual Report;
- Localism Act 2011 – New Code of Conduct; and
- Membership of the Standards Committee.

Details of the recommendations from the Standards Committee were circulated at the Council meeting, and it was:-

RESOLVED: That Council

- 1) note the Standards Committee Annual Report;
- 2) adopt the Draft Code of Conduct, attached at Appendix 1 to the report;
- 3) approve the changes to the Constitution contained in paragraph 4 of the report, which were:-
 - Members should be excluded from meetings where they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, whilst that item was under discussion and/or voted on;
 - a Standing Order be made which required disclosure of all registered Interests of Members in all circumstances;
 - Members should update and/or notify any changes to their Register of Interests within 28 days of the change taking place;
 - Disclosure be made of gifts or hospitality to the value of £25 or greater.
- 4) approve the current membership of the Committee as being nine Elected Members, with two non-voting Independent Co-optees (Mr Tony Luxton and Mrs Anita Morris, who were formerly Independent Members of the previous Standards Committee, which ceased to exist on 31 March 2012);
- 5) note that the Parish Councils would be asked again to put forward names for the two vacant Parish Co-optee places;
- 6) agree that the following persons be appointed as

Independent Person(s) for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011:-

- Professor David Norman;
- Ms Diane Howard; and
- Mr Roy Radley.

7) approves the arrangements for dealing with complaints as contained in Appendix 2 attached to the report; and

8) note that the Monitoring Officer would take steps to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of the Members Code of Conduct.

(N.B. The following Councillors declared Personal Interests in minutes of the Policy and Performance Boards for the reasons stated:-

Employment Learning and Skills PPB - Councillors Parker, A McInerney and K Loftus on minute ELS 7, as they had all sat on the Appeals Panel which considered an appeal by Halton Community Transport;

Environment and Urban Renewal PPB – Councillor Wainwright on minute EUR 10, as Chairman of Halton Transport;

Health PPB – Councillor P Lloyd Jones as a member of the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group)

COU24 ANNUAL REPORTS OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS 2011/12

The Council considered the report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, outlining the Annual Reports for each of the Policy and Performance Boards (PPBs) for 2011-12, which had been submitted and which outlined their work, made recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

It was reported that the Annual Reports had been submitted to the appropriate PPBs for consideration and had all been agreed.

RESOLVED: That the 2011- 2012 Annual Reports, submitted from the Policy and Performance Boards, be received.

COU25 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Council received a report of the Strategic Director,

Policy and Resources, regarding the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Council Scheme of Member Allowances.

The Council's Scheme of Member Allowances would expire on 31st March 2013. Before a new Scheme could be put in place, the relevant Regulations required that the Council must appoint and take advice from an Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel).

The Regulations required that the Panel consist of three or more members, none of whom were either Members of the Authority or who were disqualified from being Members of the Authority.

The Panel would report their recommendations to the Full Council meeting before the end of the 2012/13 financial year.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Executive be authorised to take all necessary steps to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Council Scheme of Member Allowances.

COU26 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 18 May 2012:-

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

In considering the minutes the following comments/observations were made:

- Councillor Dennett thanked staff for their work on the Adoption Scorecard (minute CYP6 refers), as Halton was among the top performers for the two main timeliness indicators;
- Councillor C Loftus was **not** present at the meeting of the Health PPB held on 29 May 2012, and requested that this be amended at

- the earliest opportunity;
- Councillor Gilligan referred to the renewal by Legal Services of the Lexcel and ISO accreditation (minute CS8 refers)

(N.B. Councillor Stan Hill declared a personal interest in minute DEV 6 from the Development Control minutes of 11 June 2012, as his employer had objected to the Secretary of State, and he did not take part in the discussion at the meeting)

COU27 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of the Council on 18 May 2012:-

- Development Control
- Appeals
- Appointments
- Regulatory

COU28 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Council considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Council during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption

outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

COU29 RUNCORN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION - KEY DECISION (MINUTE EXB 31 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Chief Executive, which provided a summary of the bids received for the regeneration of key sites in Runcorn Town Centre.

The report provided Members with details of the bids that were received, together with a summary and comparison for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Council

- 1) enter into detailed negotiations with Consolidated Property Group (CPG) for a binding development agreement, for the immediate redevelopment of the former Crossville Site and to explore further development of the Direct Link and temporary car park sites;
- 2) invite further discussions with the Neptune Partnership, to explore ways of engaging them and their partners to support the medium to longer term regeneration of the wider Runcorn Town Centre area, possibly including the Direct Link and temporary car park sites, depending on the outcome of further negotiations with CPG; and
- 3) recycle any capital receipts from land transactions generated from within the Runcorn Town Centre area, into further regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre.

Meeting ended at 7.10 p.m.