



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19th JUNE 2012

PRESENT: Councillor T Clements (Chair), Councillors J Garner, L Bates, B Beale, M Clarke, D Cook, C Cooke, M Couchman, S Doyle, J Faulkner, K Gant, M Gant, M Greatorex, G Hirons, A James, R Kingstone, A Lunn, M McDermid, R McDermid, K Norchi, S Peale, S Pritchard, E Rowe, P Seekings, P Standen and M Thurgood

The following officers were present: Anthony E Goodwin (Chief Executive), John Wheatley (Executive Director Corporate), Jane Hackett (Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer) and Lara Allman (Democratic & Election Services Officer)

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Claymore, D Foster, R Pritchard and J Oates.

18 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meetings held on 15 May 2012 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor E Rowe)

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 May 2012 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor L Bates)

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

20 TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Announcement by Councillor D Cook

Councillor D Cook sent his congratulations to Councillor Jeremy Oates and Nicola Oates on the birth of their daughter.

Councillor D Cook announced that Ian Gibbons is currently ill and in hospital and sent regards to Ian and his family.

Announcement by Councillor R McDermid

Councillor R McDermid has spoken to Ian Gibbons and his wife and announced that Ian is currently in the George Bryan Hospital. Any Councillor wanting to visit him can do. He does not want to be excluded and would welcome a visit, whichever side of the Chamber you are from.

21 QUESTION TIME:

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO.1
Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor C Cooke will ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Waste Management, the following question:-

"Early last year Tamworth Council finalised and produced its Climate Change Strategy. It contained a One Year Action Plan, from April 2011 until March 2012. Could you please tell me what progress has been made on this Climate Change action plan during that time and to date?"

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Waste Management gave the following reply:

I would like to thank Councillor Cooke for his question, the Strategy to which he refers to was never formally adopted by Cabinet and as a result the actions set out in the document have not been fully realised.

The draft Strategy however has provided the basis for other key strategic documents providing the framework for the many positive actions to be undertaken across the Council and various partnerships.

There are however examples of progress towards reducing the impact on Global Climate Change, these can be seen on a local level further illustrating the Council's approach towards a sensible and realistic 'Environmental Management Strategy'.

1. Initiatives within Housing Assets through Energy Efficiency Activities
2. Reducing energy usage where possible be it electrical or fossil fuels, encouraging car sharing and encouraging the reduction mileage travelled while on Council Business – directly targeting CO2 emissions.

3. An active Environmental Management Policy, such as reminding staff to turn off computer equipment when leaving work, also recycling waste where ever possible – again addressing the level of CO2 emissions.
4. Also exploring alternative methods of work such as 'Agile' working identifying patterns of work and the benefits to be gained such as staff working form home etc. this is intended to present new opportunities for the Council and its employees while also benefiting the environment through lower CO2 emissions.

These cover just a few of the initiatives been taken to reduce our impact on the environment.

Councillor Cooke's question has prompted a review of actions and timelines which will be undertaken by a Task & Finish Group reporting to the Tamworth Strategic Partnership.

In the meantime, I have asked officers to compile a more specific list of all activities undertaken by Council services that relate to addressing Climate Change. This will be forwarded to Cllr. Cooke in writing and copied to all members.

Supplementary Question

As this whole Climate Change document has been based on the premise of Global Warming and, for the last 14 years at least, since 1998, there has been Global Cooling - would you agree that it would be much more sensible for Tamworth Council to direct it's money and activities to the pollution reduction and energy and materials conservation parts of this policy rather than promoting and acting on highly doubtful theories about Global Warming per se?

The Portfolio Holder for Environment & Waste Management gave the following reply:

No.

22 CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION ARISING FROM THE LOCALISM ACT

The Report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer describing the changes and recommending the actions required for the Council to implement under the Localism Act 2011 which makes fundamental changes to the system of regulation of Standards of Conduct for elected and co-opted Councillors was considered.

RESOLVED:

- That:
- a (i) Council establish a larger Audit and Governance Committee comprising seven elected members of the District Council, appointed proportionally;
 - b the Terms of Reference of the Audit and Governance Committee be extended to encompass issues and

complaints relating to Standards of Conduct of members;

- c Council adopts a Code of Conduct to have effect from 1 July 2012.

As attached at Appendix B of the report.

The minimum Statutory requirement requires a Code that

(i) is consistent with the principles of public life and
(ii) specifies the interests which are required to be registered in addition to the mandatory registration of by the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's).

- d Council adopts Arrangements for dealing with complaints regarding members of the Council as attached at Appendix C in terms of Section 28(6) of the Act, which is the proposal for all Staffordshire Councils to allow for uniformity and consistency in dealing with complaints across Staffordshire;
- e the Monitoring Officer appoint a Deputy Monitoring Officer from one of the members of Corporate Management Team
- f the Monitoring Officer advertise a vacancy of the appointment of 1 Independent Person and up to 2 Reserve Independent Persons
- g a Committee comprising the Chair and two other members of Standards Committee/ Audit and Governance Committee be set up to deal with the appointment at (f) above and proceed to short-list and interview candidates, and to make a recommendation to Council for appointment;
- h the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the Leader, be authorised to set the initial allowances and expenses for the Independent Person and any Reserve Independent Persons, and this function subsequently be delegated to the said Committee;
- i the Monitoring Officer prepares and maintains a new register of members interests to comply with the requirements of the Act and of the Council's Code of Conduct, once adopted, and ensure that it is available for inspection as required by the Act;
- j Council adopts a Standing Order which equates to the current Code of conduct requirement that a member

must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole of consideration of any item of business in which e/she has a DPI, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of the grant of a dispensation;

- k Council delegates the power to grant dispensations –
 - i to the Monitoring Officer with an appeal to the said Committee, and
 - ii to the said Committee after consultation with the Independent Person; and
- l that the current Standards Committee and appointment of Independent members ceases to have effect from 30 June 2012 and that any complaints not concluded at that date be referred to the Committee for consideration.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor L Bates)

A motion to add further recommendations was made

- RESOLVED:** That:
- a The four amendments that were moved at the Council meeting on 17 May 2012 be dealt with in terms of Article 15 paragraph 15.02;
 - b Audit & Governance Committee review the wording under The Code of Conduct of the sanctions available, and;
 - c The recommendations as made by the Audit & Governance Committee be reported back to Council.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor S Peaple)

The Mayor