



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL
HELD ON 10th SEPTEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor R Kingstone (Mayor), Councillors R Claymore, M Bailey, D Box, P Brindley, J Chesworth, T Clements, D Cook, M Cook, C Cooke, S Doyle, A Farrell, J Faulkner, R Ford, S Goodall, K Norchi, J Oates, M Oates, S Peuple, Dr S Peuple, B Price, R Pritchard, R Rogers, P Standen, M Summers and P Thurgood

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Rebecca Neill (Head of Audit & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Lynne Pugh (Assistant Director Finance), Zoe Wolicki (Assistant Director People), Bernadette Flanagan (Senior Elections Officer) and Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) R Bilcliff, M Greatorex, M J Greatorex and T Jay

9 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor Dr S Peuple)

10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

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

The following announcements were made:

Councillor J Oates

“Thank you Mr Mayor.

You will recall the last time I stood here I announced that we had been unsuccessful with the future high street fund allocation however over the bank

holiday I'm sure many of you would have read in the press that the scheme has been extended and we have been successful so everything I said last time I take back. We are all go!

We have been successful in being awarded an additional amount of funding to get us to the stage of outline business plan by January with final business plan by April in order to go for the big bucks and get some of the future high street fund in Tamworth. So its good news following the slightly sad news we had last time that we had not got it. There is a lot of work Mr Mayor I don't have the details with me but its good news that we have been accepted on to the extended tranche one of the future high street fund"

Councillor J Chesworth

"Thank you Mr Mayor.

Last week I'm pleased to say that Tamworth was awarded gold once again in the Heart of England in Bloom competition. I would like to pass on my congratulations to the Street Scene staff in particular, who worked really hard all year and particularly make the Castle Grounds and surrounding roads look absolutely superb, so I would like to thank them and all the officers involved and congratulate them. Thank you Mr Mayor".

Chief Executive Mr Andrew Barratt

"Thank you Mr Mayor.

As members of Corporate Scrutiny will be aware when they considered the impact of Universal credit recently, and made a recommendation to Cabinet that the Leader and the Leader of the opposition jointly write to both the DWP the relevant minister and the MP to ask some question and concerns. I have a letter that has been agreed by both Councillor Cook and Councillor Peple and I would just ask if they would be prepared to sign it tonight so we can get it off and carry out Cabinets recommendation.

The Mayor Councillor R Kingstone

Before we move on, I just have one thing to say. You might have noticed a new member of the Democratic Services team, we have a new Monitoring Officer, who has taken up her post so I would like to introduce Rebecca Neill, and she will be able to help with all our monitoring.

Dr S Peple

"Thank you Mr Mayor.

Council at the last meeting will recall there was a list of outside bodies and I was grateful to the Leader for accepting the suggestion to put myself on the GBS LEP Scrutiny panel, I'm pleased to report to Council that first of all I was made vice chair at the last meeting but secondly that I have been able to influence the letter

and the wording of the letter that has gone to Ministers supporting our desire to have a choice as to which LEP we join and so I thought I would report that back to Council and thank the Leader for giving me the opportunity to serve the town. Thank you”

12 QUESTION TIME:

The Mayor Councillor R Kingstone

“Before we deal with the first part of question time, which is questions from members of the public I would just like to make a statement. In my interpretation of the Constitution it is fairly vague with regard to members of the public who submit questions and are not present. The spirit of the constitution is that if you’re a little bit nervous, a little bit scared about reading out question, if you’re taken ill or incapable of getting to the meeting then yes it is fine for the Mayor to read out your question. However, I think we need to be careful about setting an unwritten precedence where by questions can be submitted by members of the public with the expectation that the Mayor will read them out should a reasonable excuse, like the examples I’ve stated, not be given. My fear is that we are going to end up with 700 odd questions every meeting from members of the public and no one present to put them. We could potentially turn into the letters page of the Tamworth Herald rather than a Council meeting. So we will permit these questions this evening but I want us to be cautious about the reasons why people cannot be present. There are often very valid reasons and that’s why we are taking these tonight but let us be cautious as to why the questioner is not present.”

Question read out by Mayor R Kingstone

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Mr Huw Loxton, of Tamworth will ask the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services, Councillor John Chesworth, the following question:-

“I think we would all agree that the revamp of the castle ground toilets is extremely welcome. I was under the impression that the toilets would be available at all times, however after making enquiries I am told that they are controlled remotely to ensure availability meets demand and this will be monitored. There are no fixed opening hours but they will be open into the evening. Could you tell me exactly how this will work, for example, if they are deemed not necessary after 7pm, but there is an event, could they then be reopened to meet that particular demand?”

Councillor J Chesworth gave the following reply:-

“To save time and for the benefit of everyone I have Mr Loxton’s contact details I will send him the written answer, and will provide a copy of the answers for the minutes and for all members benefit if that’s acceptable”

The Mayor Councillor R Kingstone

“Councillor Chesworth I’m sorry to have to ask you but I want to try and avoid members giving written responses. Do you think it’s possible given that as members of the public are present tonight can we hear the response that you are likely to give?”

Councillor J Chesworth gave the following reply:-

“Absolutely Mr Mayor, no problem.

All of the toilets are fitted with remote time controls with the exception of the Changing Places Facility which is controlled by means of a code which can be obtained by contacting the CCTV service. The five remaining toilets are split into two groups. Three of the toilets operate restricted hours. The other two toilets are open 24 hours a day at present; however this will be monitored and may change if having the facility open at all times leads to excessive vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

There has always been the opportunity to have the public conveniences open and available during events and this hasn’t changed with the provision of the new toilets. Requirements for opening during events would be managed through the event planning process.”

Question read out by Mayor R Kingstone

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 2

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Mr Huw Loxton, of Tamworth will ask the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services, Councillor John Chesworth, the following question:-

“As some of you will know the changing places facility is a particular welcome addition to my family, and of course to many people in our town and visitors. To gain access to this facility people ring the out of hours street scene number which is available 24 hours a day which is good. That said, does this mean only those with a working phone can access this facility, and what about those unable to use a phone, for example, is a text service available for those with hearing loss or difficulties?”

Councillor J Chesworth gave the following reply:-

“The Changing Places facility is not currently open for use 24 hours a day and operates restricted hours due to the need to properly maintain it and to limit vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Unfortunately, access does require the user to make contact with CCTV control room by telephone and as such they would need access to a telephone. The nature of the facility is such that it is designed for people with severe physical disabilities and as such they would need to be accompanied by a carer in order to safely use the equipment that has been installed

One of the two toilets that is open 24 hours a day is fully Part M compliant for use by people with physical disabilities. There is no need for contact to be made with anyone in order to access this facility.”

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 1

Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor P Standen will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor D Cook, the following question:-

“At last year’s July council I submitted a question asking the Leader of the Council to provide an update on the responses to the letters sent to our neighbouring authorities regarding potential developments on Tamworth's borders? Could the Leader of the Council please update members as to the current status and what has been achieved in the last year and quarter?”

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

“Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Standen for your question.

Building on ours borders without the correct mitigations remains a massive concern for all of us cross party and for the authority itself.

In my answer to you last July I referenced I was meeting with Kit Malthouse, the Minister for Housing in the Home Office building on 18th July 2018. Myself and Mr Barratt (CEO) had this meeting and were successful in getting the Minister to understand the problem we face. What has been more difficult is finding a single fit solution.

I also stated I had sat down with the Leader of Staffordshire County Council to discuss the production of an overarching study on Infrastructure needs vs. new developments. I have had many meeting with him since on the matter and I can confirm we were given a first draft on Thursday 5th September 2019 while at a meeting in Stafford of all Leaders in Staffordshire. The document is so big I cannot E-mail, so we only have one hard copy at present but will fix that ASAP. It has been called the SIP (Strategic Infrastructure Plan).

The document provides a good evidence base for all Councils locally to use in preparation of Local Plans and using at planning committees when making judgements. While the document does not have a legal foothold as such, the evidence within could well do. We are now challenging both SCC and Warwickshire County Council in how it aligns cross border, as the bigger long-term problem is to the East in Warwickshire.

We continue to monitor all progress on developments on our border and I can confirm that the new Assistant Director of Regeneration has been left in no doubt of my feelings on this matter.”

Councillor P Standen asked the following supplementary question

“I hope it feeds in to what you’ve just said, can I thank the leader for his response and could he state what concrete resource people of Tamworth can expect to see within the next six – twelve month’s time frame”

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

“Thank you Mr Mayor if I get my way there will be no concrete going down anywhere on our borders

I think it’s a complicated problem I think we all understand how the Local Plan process actually functions. Do Councils actually build houses these days? In the main, no, willing land owners do.

What we’ve got around Tamworth is a fundamental opportunity and problem at the same time. Land values in and around Tamworth vs what it costs to develop are very advantageous to developers, Tamworth is a very popular place to settle, it’s a very growing place still. What we need are the mitigations, we need to understand what happens when a new housing development pops up on our borders and how it affects our infrastructure, whether that be doctors surgeries, roads, everything involved in the infrastructure provision.

Can I sit here and guarantee no developments will pop up in the next ten years, one year, twenty years, no I cannot, what I can guarantee this Council and I hope cross party will continue to fight to ensure that every development has the correct mitigations that the residents of Tamworth deserve and I hope that remains a cross party commitment. Thank you Mr Mayor”

13 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT SERVICE AND ACTUAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018/19

The Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance updates Cabinet on the Annual Treasury report this report is a requirement of the Council’s reporting procedures. It covers the Treasury activity for 2018/19, and the actual Prudential Indicators for 2018/19.

The report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes in accordance with Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003. It also provides an opportunity to review the approved Treasury Management Strategy for the current year and enables Members to consider and approve any issues identified that require amendment.

RESOLVED

That Council

Approved the actual 2018/19 Prudential and Treasury Indicators within the report and shown at Appendix 1; and

Accepted the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2018/19

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor P Standen)

14 TAMWORTH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY - REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

In accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, every council in England and Wales must undertake and complete a review of all of the polling district and polling places in its area

RESOLVED

That Council

1. Adopted the polling districts and polling places as listed in **Appendix A** to this report.
2. Settled the polling place as the polling district plus any adjacent polling district(s).
3. Noted the polling stations proposed by the Returning Officer as listed in **Appendix A** to this report.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor Dr S Peuple)

The Mayor