



Minutes of a meeting of the COUNCIL HELD ON 4th APRIL 2017

PRESENT: Councillors K Norchi (Chair), J Chesworth (Vice-Chair), R Bilcliff, S Claymore, T Clements, D Cook, C Cooke, A Couchman, S Doyle, J Faulkner, R Ford, M Gant, J Goodall, S Goodall, M Greatorex, R Kingstone, A Lunn, A James, T Madge, J Oates, T Peale, R Pritchard, R Rogers, P Seekings, P Standen, M Summers, M Thurgood and P Thurgood

The following officers were present: Anthony E Goodwin (Chief Executive), John Wheatley (Executive Director Corporate Services), Andrew Barratt (Corporate Director Growth, Assets and Environment), Jane Hackett (Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer), Christie Tims (Head of Organisational Development) and Janice Clift (Democratic and Elections Officer)

46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Oates and S Peale

47 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2017 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor P Standen)

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

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

The following announcements were made:-

Councillor J Faulkner:-

First of all I would like to thank all Councillors and Officers for their very kind thoughts over the last few weeks and obviously I have had a great deal to cope with. You all know that Pam was part of the Labour Party but what you didn't know is that she was once a Conservative. Basically growing up in Coventry it was the young conservative gentlemen who had the flash cars and used to go for suppers at Kenilworth Castle which she much enjoyed. However when it came to an election and she was told to go out and canvass she went round the doors and suddenly a person spouted off at Pam and she decided she didn't believe in any of that and left the Conservative Party. Whichever party we represent here we have the interests of Tamworth at heart. We have different approaches towards it but ultimately this is our goal. You are all welcome if you so wish to attend Pam's funeral. You are not my enemies. We should remember that nothing is meant personally its agreeing to ways forward and therefore I would like to thank you again and if you so wish to attend tomorrow you are welcome.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor D Cook:-

I would like to request a change of the order of business under procedure rule 4.13 (c). I would like to request that Green Waste Subscription Scheme be brought forward to the first item after Question Time.

The Mayor of Tamworth, Councillor K Norchi:-

Bank holiday weekend sees a weekend of entertainment. Firstly on Friday night at Elford Club there will be a Rock 'N' Roll night tickets are £5.00. Following on to the Saturday night at Bolehall Manor where there will be a full DJ night with different DJ's, myself being included. Tickets are £10.00 and food will be available and fancy dress if you so wish. On the Sunday night you can test your brain with a quiz night being held at the Castle hotel. There will be teams of 4 and it is £10.00 per team to enter and food will be available.

50 QUESTION TIME:

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Mr Gordon Moore of Tamworth will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor D Cook, the following question:-

"Would the Leader of the Council please invite all parties to forget their political allegiances and join together to take on the fight against Lichfield District Council to tell them we won't allow them to build on the borders of our town anymore? The people of Tamworth are fed up with their constant dumping on our town?"

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

Thank you Mr Moore. The simple answer is yes, as I have already stated in my piece in the Herald 3 weeks ago we need to come together this time. This is about Tamworth.

This Council's position on the matter has been clear from the outset and formed the basis of several representations to Lichfield District Council Members and officers. We even objected to elements of LDC's Local Plan. I reiterated this position which was reported in the local press.

It is not a new position for political reasons, it is a battle we have fought for quite a few years and I intend, with support to win.

I have asked officers to prepare a report to Cabinet later this month setting out the options available to us in respect of the current and any potential future developments with a view to drawing them to the attention of the relevant minister/Secretary of State.

We are working out the precise figure, so forgive the crude example. The urban footprint in Tamworth could grow by over 10% certainly the number of homes may because of the decisions of other Councils to park development on our doorstep. Tamworth Borough Council has very little say in this and certainly the town sees no new required infrastructure.

We are making the government aware.

Gordon Moore asked the following supplementary question:-

"Would Councillor Cook please confirm to me whether all parties are in agreement with my question, as I feel this is an important issue to the people of Tamworth?"

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

I would hope so I would genuinely hope so. I've heard some mutterings but haven't had a full conversation yet. We are waiting on an answer from the Secretary of State currently with regards to Arkhall Farm. As soon as I have that I will meet with all party leaders to discuss the way forward.

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:-

"During the State of Tamworth Debate last month, the Leader of the Council when referring to the Homeless Night Shelter scheme run by Tamworth Churches said "The problem that we have with some of the voluntary groups around homelessness and shelters they own is that they don't carry safeguarding policies"; Does the Leader accept the feedback from members of local clergy that they do have safeguarding policies?"

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

Firstly Mr Mayor can I genuinely thank Cllr Standen for the question and an opportunity to apologise in this chamber. At the State of the Borough debate my intention was to be positive about the work which is done by churches and voluntary organisations to tackle homelessness in Tamworth and to help those most vulnerable in our community, not just because this is one of the key priorities of the Borough Council, but because by working together, I believed we could do more. I am extremely sorry that my remarks have been taken out of context if you did not hear the whole speech and have thus caused hurt and upset.

I did not mean to suggest that the churches have no safeguarding policies in place – I know that they do and that they have responsible, nominated officers. What I was trying to convey was that the levels of safeguarding required of a church or voluntary group may differ from that required by Tamworth Borough Council, which also legislates for safeguarding, and that the expectations on the Council sometimes go further than those of other organisations. The complication was aligning our policies which I believe has been resolved.

The example I gave of trying to accommodate a 15-year-old-girl and a 55-year-old man in the same night shelter was an extreme example which I used to illustrate to my newer council colleagues the challenges faced every day in respect of safeguarding - the dilemma of 'do we help the people or do we comply with the rules?' I in no way intended to suggest it had actually happened in any Church. It was neither an attack nor a criticism of the work the churches do – I was trying to be positive and praise the hard work they do in difficult circumstances. The bizarre thing is everyone in the room that night knew exactly what I was trying to say, but it loses context when written down.

In the cold light of day I can see this example for colleagues was an entirely wrong choice of words and subject matter, I retract the example and offer my absolute and unreserved apologies to those who work and volunteer in tackling these issues in our society. While trying to be positive and promote this fine work and trying to explain the complication from our side of the issue my choice of words were clearly wrong and I should not have used them. For this I have already promised to write to the Churches in Tamworth apologising for the poor choice of words.

What is clear is that both the Tamworth churches and Tamworth Borough Council have an on-going and genuine commitment to working hard to help those people who find themselves homeless in Tamworth and to tackle those issues which lead to homelessness.

Councillor P Standen asked the following supplementary question:-

“Does the Leader of the Council like me believe that members of this council would benefit from working as volunteers in schemes such as the Winter Night Shelter?”

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

Again I would like to thank Councillor Standen. It's actually a rarity when questions are submitted to this Council to receive an e-mail asking questions of what the extent

is. Councillor Standen is very genuine about this and I would really like to thank him. I believe everyone in the room knew what I was trying to say but I just got the wording wrong. I would benefit every member in this Chamber or society would benefit in the issue that you raised but in other aspects of volunteering around Tamworth. The third sector in Tamworth is something that we desperately need to protect while other authorities around us put that money from commissioning of what the voluntary sector this Council keeps pushing forward because we do not believe in the third sector. Councillor Standen is fundamentally correct to raise it.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 2

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

“Could you please advise what the cost of consultation with residents, local businesses and Community and Voluntary Groups has been for Tamworth Listens by year for the last three years?”

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

Thank you Councillor Standen

I can confirm that for the Tamworth Listens member’s event the costs for the last three years were

2014/15 £689.50
2015/16 £448.50
2016/17 £347.50

In regards the total consultation budget, as Tamworth Listens is the overarching banner for all consultation, the total consultation budget for 2017/18 is £3,470 (for external support excluding internal staff time). However, Budget consultation costs around £3k p.a. and the Local Council tax reduction scheme consultation costs around £3k p.a. with the average cost of corporate consultation at £7,216 for the past 3 years.

Housing Tenant Participation (within the HRA) also has a tenant consultation budget of £19,050 (for external support excluding internal staff time) – the total budget for tenant participation (including staffing) is £199,450.

I have with me a full breakdown of the GF budgets you mention per year for the last three years. I won’t read out the whole thing, but happy to give it to you and submit it for the minutes if members are comfortable with this approach.

Consultation Costs	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Budget	3470	3470	8480	9490

Costs				
Tamworth Listens Theatre Hire		347.50	448.50	454.50
Budget Consultation		2915	2790	6020
Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme consultation		2790	2220	incl above
SNAP Survey subscription		664.50	664.50	899.25
Fast hosts Website domain subscriptions		27.96	17.96	10.98
Stationery		83.92	183.54	85.50
LG Inform plus / ESD toolkit		809	0	0
Question time postcards		0	0	215
Total	0	7637.88	6324.50	7685.23

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 3

Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor T People will ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Culture, Councillor J Goodall, the following question:-

“Are there any plans to end our co-operation with Lichfield in terms of waste disposal?”

Councillor J Goodall gave the following reply:-

As Members will be aware all services across all directorates of the Council are monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure they are providing effective and efficient services to our residents.

If improvement or greater efficiencies can be made, it will be carefully considered on a business case type approach to ensure we are always providing services that are delivering effectively to our community.

Councillor T People asked the following supplementary question:-

“It was stated in the Tamworth Herald by Councillor Kingstone that many Councillors are considering ending the partnership as an act of retaliation over the Arkhall Farm development. Do you believe we should consider ending it for that reason?”

Councillor J Goodall gave the following reply:-

Each one should judge for themselves. I don't think it is my place to answer for everyone.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 4

Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor T People will ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Councillor M Thurgood, the following question:-

“How many people are currently being housed by this council in temporary hotel accommodation and how many have been in the last few months?”

Councillor M Thurgood gave the following reply:-

Mr Mayor

I thank Councillor Peaple for his question. This is an incredibly important area for this Council's housing team and especially for those who are currently in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

As of 3rd April 2017 there are 26 Households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation plus a further 8 accommodated in Private Sector Leased properties.

Over the 6 months from October 2016 to March 2017 a total of 59 households were placed in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation.

This is in comparison to 61 households in October 2015 to March 2016.

This includes 16 households where there are children of which there are a total of 20 children.

Homeless households are awarded priority under the Council's allocations scheme and I can confirm that all of those who are currently calling a Bed and Breakfast home have move on plans and we will shortly be implementing personal housing plans in preparation for the new Homeless Reduction Bill

Thank you

51 GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION SCHEME

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Culture presented her report and added a new recommendation number 4 with the existing recommendation 4 becoming recommendation number 5. The Portfolio Holder moved all 5 recommendations of the report, which was seconded by Councillor D Cook. After a full debate and on a request for a recorded vote being demanded it was resolved that Members approved proposals to introduce a chargeable Garden Waste Collection Service from 1 January 2018.

RESOLVED:

- That Members approved
- 1** the cessation of the current free garden waste collection service from 31st December 2017;
 - 2** the introduction of a chargeable (opt in) garden waste collection service from 1st January 2018. The annual charge will be £36 per bin;
 - 3** to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of

Growth, Assets and Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Culture the setting of the subscription rate for future years (in line with the Councils Fees and Charges Policy) and to take all steps necessary to implement the proposal, making any necessary minor amendments as identified during project implementation;

- 4 that authority be granted to the Corporate Director Growth, Assets and Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Culture to have delegated authority to amend the charging regime, should it prove necessary during the detailed project work, to remove the two tier structure and replace with a single £36.00 charge per bin per year if this be agreed across the shared service, given there are no financial implications arising from this change due to the modelling being based upon the flat £36.00 level; and
- 5 to finance all the project start-up costs using the funds held in the Joint Waste Service Reserve and fully reimburse the Reserve with the receipts from the subscription charge.

(Moved by Councillor J Goodall and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

FOR

Councillor J Chesworth
 Councillor S Claymore
 Councillor T Clements
 Councillor D Cook
 Councillor S Doyle
 Councillor R Ford
 Councillor M Gant
 Councillor J Goodall
 Councillor S Goodall
 Councillor M Greatorex
 Councillor A James
 Councillor R Kingstone
 Councillor A Lunn
 Councillor J Oates
 Councillor R Pritchard
 Councillor R Rogers
 Councillor M Summers
 Councillor M Thurgood
 Councillor P Thurgood

AGAINST

Councillor R Bilcliff
 Councillor A Couchman
 Councillor J Faulkner
 Councillor T Madge
 Councillor T Peaple
 Councillor P Seekings
 Councillor P Standen

ABSTAIN

Councillor C Cooke
 Councillor K Norchi

52 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT

The Report of the Chair of Audit and Governance Committee advising Members on the action taken by the Audit and Governance Committee for the municipal year 2016/17 was considered.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be endorsed

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor J Faulkner)

53 SCRUTINY CHAIRS' REPORT

The Annual Report of the Chair of Aspire and Prosper Scrutiny Committee were received.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be endorsed

(Moved by Councillor S Goodall and seconded by Councillor P Thurgood)

The Annual Report of the Chair of Healthier and Safer Scrutiny Committee were received.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be endorsed

(Moved by Councillor A James and seconded by Councillor C Cooke)

54 PAY POLICY REPORT 2017

The Leader of the Council reported details on Tamworth Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement so that statutory guidance as set out in Section 38 of the Localism Act is adhered to.

RESOLVED: That the Members formally approved the Pay Policy 2017 for adoption and publication in line with the Localism Act 2011

Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor P Standen)

The Mayor
