



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 16th JULY 2019

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

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Zoe Wolicki (Assistant Director People) and Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) M Bailey, P Brindley, J Chesworth and R Pritchard

1 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

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

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor P Standen declared an interest in Agenda item 6 and advised during this item he would leave the Chamber.

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

The following announcements were made:

Councillor Mayor R Kingstone

“There have been a few questions as to why we are here in this Council Chamber this evening

I am firmly of the opinion unless we start to use this building it will fall in to a state of disrepair so the only way we can encourage other people to use this building is to use it ourselves.

So for the duration of my term of office as Mayor, all future full Council meetings unless there is a situation where we have a contentious issue and a large number of members of public wish to attend, all Council meetings will be held in this building if you have any problems with that please see me after.

With that in mind I have noticed Councillor Oates wanted to comment.

Councillor J Oates

“Thank you Mr Mayor. There was an announcement I have to make and that is that Council may be aware we applied for future high street funding earlier on in the year unfortunately we were unsuccessful with this first round of funding, so we will not be in receipt of any future high street funding at this stage, however we have bid for heritage action zone funding which is a spin off, of the same support and that bid has being submitted.

Going back to future high street funding we have received a letter from Jake Berry MP and I would just like to quote the start of the second paragraph “we were impressed by the standard of your application so I would like to offer you bespoke feedback on your bid and your proposal will be pass ported to the second round of the funding which will begin next year” so bad news is we didn’t get it this year, however from that paragraph there I would suggest we are in a good position to get it next year and they have offered bespoke feedback on our bid so at this point there is light at the end of the tunnel Mr Mayor”

Councillor Dr S People

“Thank you Mr Mayor as many of you attended earlier I’m sure that I need to say very little, Which I’m sure will be a blessing but Debbie Bates was one of those wonderful lovely people that gave herself to so many people and down in the hub the other day the number of ordinary simple straight forward people who were writing in that book saying their memories of her and the number of people who were there today demonstrated just how much she touched the hearts of so many people.

It meant a huge amount to Councillor Bates and it made a real tremendous positive thing on a day which can never be right, which can never be good, but for which can be made better by the fact that there are those around you who value the person that you’ve lost and therefore Mr Mayor if we do agree I would like to invite Councillors to pause for a moment.

Councillor Mayor R Kingstone

“Yes given that Debbie was a past Mayoress of Tamworth just a few years ago it’s only right and proper that we just stand for a moment on reflection and thank Debbie for her contribution she has made to Tamworth as a whole.

4 QUESTION TIME:**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 1**

Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor Dr S People will ask the Portfolio Holder for Heritage and Growth, Councillor J Oates, the following question:-

“Does the portfolio holder share the view of his Conservative colleague that it does not matter if the Tamworth Enterprise Centre never makes a financial return?”

Councillor J Oates gave the following reply:-

“Thank you Mr Mayor, Yes the primary purpose of the Tamworth Enterprise Centre is to incubate growth from the local economy”

Councillor Dr.S People asked the following supplementary question

Thank you Mr Mayor, Can I therefore ask the portfolio holder whether he is been completely inconsistent since we were told all other investments have to meet financial criteria and yet apparently this one doesn't.”

Councillor J Oates gave the following reply:-

Thank you Mr Mayor that very much depends on the measure you are using against success, an economy like crops will only grow if provided with the right conditions.

The Borough Councils investment in the Tamworth Enterprise Centre is about growth of the local economy.

We are only 2 years in, we have already seen some fantastic results from the enterprise centre in fact it's that well thought of, only last month we had officers from Solihull come to have a look to see what we are doing and to see if they can copy our success to drive their economy.

The returns are far greater than our investment and making a profit in any individual buildings.

The Council has provided market leading, high quality, easy access, small business accommodation that has set the standard for other developments

We now have 3 other entities' of a similar nature open in our town centre.

Every current tenant has grown to the extent where they have taken on extra members of staff who are giving people an opportunity to get started.

Over the 2 years we have run training courses , Rented meeting rooms out and held floor space for interviews etc., to have 5000 people take advantage of those

courses, the meeting rooms or a place for an interview venue so yes it is a success and yes it depends on the measure .

In fact we are not just pushing our way through Tamworth we also have the GBS LEP and the growth hub based in Tamworth and when they put a course on in Tamworth they get more people than they do at any other venue. It's a real focal point and we should be proud of this.

We are constantly trying to become financially sustainable we are only 2 years in, we will continue to strive to do that we need to re assess our charges and we need to make wherever possible the best return to the tax payer of Tamworth. But this is not just about an investment in cash terms to the Borough Council this is about an investment to our economy and the wider benefits which help the businesses of Tamworth grow.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 2

Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor Dr S People will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor D Cook, the following question:-

“Does the Leader of the Council agree that if Tamworth is to sit in the Stoke and Staffordshire LEP, it should have its own seat on the board and not have to share representation with another authority?”

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

“Thank you Mr Mayor.

Could not agree more with the statement in the question. In fact around twelve months ago, I spoke with the deputy Leader of Staffordshire County Council where I stated that if government told Tamworth that we are now members of the Staffs / Stoke LEP only that we want a seat on the board to fully engage.

That said, Cllr People will be aware within the changes to the governance of all LEP's (arising from the “Strengthening Local Enterprise Partnerships” paper set out by government), there is a proposed limit on board membership numbers. These both limits the number of overall seats on the board, and further limits the public sector membership of those seats to a maximum of a third of this number.

The maximum permanent board membership is 20 people with at least two thirds from the private sector, 14 places basically. There are also targets around female representation and other equality box ticking. All members will of course know that I support equality in as aspects of our society, but forced equality does not achieve equality, it just box ticking.

It was agreed at the last Staffordshire Leaders meeting that there was to be one seat for SCC, one for SOT city, two districts places from the north, and two from the south.

This means that southern Staffordshire has two seats on the SSLEP for four districts, it was then agreed by all Leaders that Tamworth and Lichfield will

alternate for one seat, and Cannock and East Staffs will alternate for the other seat.

On 28th of June, I met with our MP Chris Pincher to discuss a few matters of concern locally. The LEP review and its HR equality box ticking was on my list and Chris was left fully understanding the cross party feeling in Tamworth about the lack of need for the review.

Councillor Dr.S People asked the following supplementary question

Thank you Mr Mayor In coming to my supplemental I'm sure the leader will indulge me slightly when I say that I raised the issue of the LEP review at the GBS LEP and we are writing from the GBS LEP to the current Mr Jake Berry of previous mention to ask him to reconsider, the one hope is that if his preferred candidate in the leadership election wins he may get moved and we might get a fresh set of thinking.

The leader will I'm asking comment then on 2 things first of all the Staffordshire LEP praises the fact that it supports nurse training at Staffordshire University to the best of my knowledge nurse training places are allocated by the government it's not therefore bringing in additional work or employment. It's simply subsidising an organisation that can afford to pay their chief executive two hundred and one thousand pounds a year so I think the leader will agree with me that some of this rigor of appraisal needs to improve, therefore would he agree that if we are forced in to this LEP then we need to see an improvement in scrutiny arrangements which currently only involve Staffordshire County Council and Stoke Council holding a joint scrutiny meeting none of the districts are represented on that scrutiny committee unless the members are double hatted and would you agree you therefore must be greater transparency of the LEPs activities if we are going to be made to be members. Thank you."

Councillor D Cook gave the following reply:-

Thank you again Mr Mayor and thank you again Councillor People for your question. I'm not sure I can comment on nurse training because it's the first I've heard of it, but I'm more than happy to discuss it with the member.

On the Scrutiny point, 100% agree and I charge Councillor Oates with raising that with the County Council if possible about the fairness of that.

I will quote Councillor Oates on something he says to me quite regularly about the LEP review, Yes I fundamentally expect there to be a different minister in place once the new prime minister is selected but as Councillor Oates regularly reminds me the ministry is one thing, the civil service don't change and that's our concern.

I was informed yesterday by the Chief Executive that the first action had been taken by the LEP review where Chesterfield have been forcibly removed from the city region of Sheffield LEP and forced in to Derby Nottinghamshire, I'm aware Councillor Greatorex knows Chesterfield quite well and if anybody wants to speak

to Councillor Greateorex he will tell you Chesterfield is part of the city region of Chesterfield it has very little to do with Derby or Nottingham.
It's about putting things in nice neat circles and economies just simply don't work that way.

5 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019

The report of the Leader of the Council which details Tamworth Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement so that statutory guidance as set out in S38 of the Localism Act is adhered to

RESOLVED That Council;

Approved the pay policy statement 2019 for adoption and publication, in line with the localism Act 2011

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

6 APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

Councillor P standen left the Chamber at 18.36

The report of the Chief Executive to seek Council approval to appoint a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer (DERO), with the same duties as the Electoral Registration Officer, to provide resilience and business continuity in this role

RESOLVED That Council;

Approved the appointment of the senior elections officer, Mrs Bernadette Flanagan, to the role of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer under section 52(2) of the representation of People Act 1983, having the same duties as the Electoral Registration Officer.

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

Councillor P Standen returned to the chamber at 18.40

7 CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Report of the Chief Executive to seek Council approval to appoint a Monitoring Officer in accordance with local government legislation and the Councils Constitution

RESOLVED that Council;

Approved the appointment of Rebecca Neill to the role of Monitoring Officer upon her commencement with the authority as Head of Audit & Governance on the 19th August 2019.

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

8 OUTSIDE BODIES LIST 2019/2020

RESOLVED

That Council;

Endorsed the Outside Bodies List 2019/2020 with an amendment to Councillor Dr S Peoples initials.

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

The Mayor

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