

COUNCIL

Tuesday, 28 September 2010

Present: Councillor Ken Ball (Mayor), Councillor Pat Case (Deputy Mayor), Councillors Nora Ball, Eric Bell, Judith Boothman, Alistair Bradley, Terry Brown, Henry Caunce, Alan Cullens, Magda Cullens, Mike Devaney, David Dickinson, Doreen Dickinson, Dennis Edgerley, Christopher France, Anthony Gee, Peter Goldsworthy, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Harold Heaton, Catherine Hoyle, Keith Iddon, Kevin Joyce, Hasina Khan, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, Peter Malpas, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan, Simon Moulton, Mick Muncaster, Beverley Murray, Mark Perks, Alan Platt, Debra Platt, Geoffrey Russell, Rosie Russell, Joyce Snape, Ralph Snape, John Walker, Stella Walsh and Peter Wilson

10.C.122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Julia Berry, Pat Haughton, Laura Lennox and Edward Smith.

10.C.123 MINUTES OF THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Council held on 20 July 2010 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Mayor.

10.C.124 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest by any Member in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

10.C.125 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked everyone who had supported the Big Band Night in the Lancastrian Room on 17 September 2010. The event, in aid of the Mayor's Charities, had been well attended. During the evening, the Mayor had announced the start of his sponsored weight loss programme, which all Councillors were invited to support.

The Mayor also reminded Members of the 'At the Movies' Brass Band Night event being organised in the Lancastrian Room on 19 November 2010 to raise funds for his Charity Appeal.

The Mayor also respectfully reminded all Members to switch off their mobile devices, as there had been remarks after the last meeting about Councillors commenting on 'Twitter' during meetings.

10.C.126 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public attended the meeting to put forward the following question to the Council:

"How satisfied are you that the content of the questionnaire on Rural Housing Needs is appropriate, will give the necessary information, and will represent value for money?"

The member of the public questioned the relevance of the survey, the likely difficulties in ensuring meaningful responses to a number of questions, and the anticipated aims of the exercise.

The Executive Member (Partnerships and Planning) responded by clarifying that the principal aim of the survey was to seek information from rural households on the existing composition of the households and the likely future demands and expectations for housing accommodation in preferred locations. The outcome of the survey would help to inform future decisions of the Council and its partners on plans to invest in schemes in the most suitable locations that meet proven demand.

The survey had been organised in accordance with both best practice and the Council's Equality Scheme and the Executive Member pointed out that completion of the questionnaire was at the discretion of residents.

The Executive Member also confirmed that, unlike some other Councils, the Chorley survey was being conducted in-house, without the need for consultants.

A supplementary question from the member of the public requested the Council's anticipated level of responses and confirmation that the results of the survey would be published.

The Executive Member, in reply, stated that a response rate in excess of 15% was expected and that he expected that the results of the survey would be published in due course.

10.C.127 EXECUTIVE CABINET

(a) Petitions Scheme

The Council considered a report of the Director of Transformation seeking approval for the adoption of a Petitions Scheme for the Council which had been compiled in accordance with the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and endorsed by the Executive Cabinet at its meeting on 12 August 2010.

The scheme clarified that petitions containing more than 10 signatures would be referred to the Executive Cabinet or Executive Member for consideration, with the ultimate action taken being reported to a subsequent Council meeting. Petitions containing at least 750 signatures would be automatically referred to a public meeting of the Cabinet and petitions signed by more than 1,500 people would be debated at a full Council meeting. In all instances, the respective lead petitioners would be informed of the progress and result of the petitions.

The Executive Leader acknowledged that, whilst the earlier Government guidance on the production of Petition Schemes was expected to be withdrawn shortly, the adoption of the submitted scheme would accord with best practice and the need to meet minimum requirements by clarifying how petitions should be organised and presented and the processes followed by the Council in assessing and reporting back on the petitions.

It was moved by the Executive Leader (Councillor Peter Goldsworthy) and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor Pat Case), and **RESOLVED that the Petitions Scheme, as now submitted, be approved for adoption and included in the Council's Constitution.**

(b) Capital Programme, 2010/11 to 2012/13 - Monitoring

The Council considered a report of the Director of Transformation on proposals to revise the Capital Programme for 2010/11 to 2012/13.

It was proposed to increase the Capital Programme for the three year period from £12,037,260 to £13,327,540 as a result of the rephasing of £728,830 expenditure from 2009/10 and the financing of new projects by external contributions or virement from other existing capital budgets.

The respective Executive Members responded to a number of queries and concerns raised by Members, particularly in relation to the number of affordable housing units likely to be provided with the aid of available Section 106 contributions; the likely start of housing construction on the Fairview Farm, Adlington site; and the possible need for the capitalisation of future restructuring costs.

It was moved by the Executive Member (Transformation) (Councillor Kevin Joyce), seconded by the Executive Leader, and **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the revised Capital Programme for 2010/11, as presented in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved.**
- (2) That the amendments to the provisional Capital Programme for 2011/12 and 2012/13, as presented in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be noted.**

(c) General Report

Consideration was given to a general report which summarised the principal items of business discussed and determined at the two meetings of the Executive Cabinet held on 12 August and 2 September 2010.

The respective Executive Members responded to a number of queries and concerns raised by Members, particularly in relation to the savings made and the impact on services as a result of vacancies not being filled; the Council's performance in the determination of planning applications as compared against the respective targets; the authority's future plans for the collection and disposal of food waste; and the recent re-engagement of the Council's Treasury Management Advisors.

A few Members also questioned the effectiveness of the current neighbourhood working regime, emphasising the need for adequate liaison with Members and citing particular issues within Adlington. In response, the Executive Member (Places) undertook to meet the three Adlington Ward Councillors separately to discuss their concerns and the Mayor suggested that Members wishing to raise specific neighbourhood issues should submit formal questions to the Council under Council Procedure Rule 8.

The Executive Member (Transformation) undertook to send a written explanation to Councillor Dennis Edgerley to clarify the performance statistics for the processing of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims as reported to the 12 August 2010 Executive Cabinet meeting.

The Executive Member (Transformation) also undertook to respond to Councillor Catherine Hoyle's enquiry as to whether the Council currently levied a charge, or proposed to levy a charge, for the payment of bills by debit or credit cards.

It was moved by the Executive Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader, and **RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

10.C.128 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Council considered a general report which summarised the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its last two meetings on 9 and 31 August 2010, together with reports on the progress of the respective Task and Finish Groups' inquiries into Asset Management and Allotment provision issues.

It was moved by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Adrian Lowe), seconded by the Vice-Chair (Councillor Alan Cullens), and **RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

10.C.129 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE

The Director of Transformation presented a report seeking the Council's endorsement of a recommendation to appoint a new Parish Council representative onto the Standards Committee, following the election of a previous representative, Alan Platt, to the Borough Council.

Town and Parish Councils had been invited to submit nominations for the appointment of a representative member on the Standards Committee, following which an appointment panel of the Committee had interviewed each of the three applicants.

It was moved by Councillor Debra Platt (Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee), seconded by Councillor Stella Walsh, and **RESOLVED that Parish Councillor Eileen McGhee be appointed as a Town/Parish Council representative on the Standards Committee.**

10.C.130 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS APPEALS PANEL

The Council was requested to appoint a Panel of Members with the delegated authority to hear and determine applications from residents for Discretionary Housing Payments.

RESOLVED – That a Discretionary Housing Payments Appeals Panel, comprising the following three Members, be appointed with authority to hear and determine applications for discretionary housing payments:

**Councillor Peter Goldsworthy (Chair);
Councillor Marie Gray;
Councillor Hasina Khan.**

10.C.131 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - REVISION OF MEMBERSHIP

It was moved by Councillor Peter Wilson, seconded by Councillor June Molyneaux, and **RESOLVED that Councillor Alistair Bradley replace Councillor Dennis Edgerley as a Member of the Development Control Committee until 1 January 2011.**

10.C.132 NOTICES OF MOTION GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

(a) **Alleygates**

The Council considered the following motion submitted by Councillor Peter Wilson:

“This Council recognises that the Alleygate Scheme has brought huge benefits to the people of Chorley in the reduction of anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime, as well as evidenced in numerous past reports submitted to this Council.

Given its proven role in increasing residents belief that they live in the safe and crime-free communities which are a fundamental part of this Council's fully funded strategy, this Council requires the immediate restitution of the scheme that was cancelled at the Executive Cabinet meeting of 12 August 2010 without full and proper consultation with communities and councillors.”

During the debate on the Motion, the following amendment was moved by the Executive Member (Places) (Councillor Eric Bell) and seconded by the Executive Member (Transformation) (Councillor Kevin Joyce):

“This Council endorses the decision taken by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 12 August 2010 to end the Alleygate project on the basis that there is independent evidence available that concludes that alley gating in Chorley has little impact on already low levels of crime. This despite the fact that under the present administration £136,000 has been spent compared with £38,000 under Labour.”

A request was made under Council Procedure Rule 17.2 for a recorded vote on the amendment, which was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Eric Bell, Judith Boothman, Pat Case, Henry Counce, Alan Cullens, Magda Cullens, Michael Devaney, David Dickinson, Doreen Dickinson, Peter Goldsworthy, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Harold Heaton, Keith Iddon, Kevin Joyce, Peter Malpas, Greg Morgan, Simon Moulton, Michael Muncaster, Mark Perks, Alan Platt, Debra Platt, Geoffrey Russell, Rosemary Russell and John Walker.

AGAINST: Councillors Ken Ball, Nora Ball, Alistair Bradley, Terry Brown, Dennis Edgerley, Christopher France, Anthony Gee, Catherine Hoyle, Hasina Khan, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, June Molyneaux, Beverley Murray, Joyce Snape, Ralph Snape, Stella Walsh and Peter Wilson.

The Mayor declared the amendment carried and it was **RESOLVED that the amendment be approved accordingly.**

(b) **Police and Community Support Officers**

The Council considered the following motion submitted by Councillor Peter Wilson:

“This Council recognises the invaluable role played by Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs) within our local community. In light of this, the Council expresses grave concern over any possible reduction in the number of jointly funded PCSOs following the Government's autumn spending review, and would seek to counter any consequent negative impact on its own Borough Strategy and Neighbourhood Plans.

Therefore, in order to help to serve and protect the people of Chorley, this Council hereby undertakes to re-direct its own portion of the funding for each and any jointly funded PCSO position lost, to the budget for Neighbourhood Wardens, thereby defending and maintaining frontline services within our community.”

Following a debate on the motion, a request was made under Council Procedure Rule 17.2 for a recorded vote on the motion, which was as follows:

FOR: Councillors Ken Ball, Nora Ball, Alistair Bradley, Terry Brown, Dennis Edgerley, Christopher France, Anthony Gee, Catherine Hoyle, Hasina Khan, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, June Molyneaux, Beverley Murray, Joyce Snape, Ralph Snape, Stella Walsh and Peter Wilson.

AGAINST: Councillors Eric Bell, Judith Boothman, Pat Case, Henry Counce, Alan Cullens, Magda Cullens, Michael Devaney, David Dickinson, Doreen Dickinson, Peter Goldsworthy, Marie Gray, Alison Hansford, Harold Heaton, Keith Iddon, Kevin Joyce, Peter Malpas, Greg Morgan, Simon Moulton, Michael Muncaster, Mark Perks, Alan Platt, Debra Platt, Geoffrey Russell and John Walker.

ABSTAIN: Councillor Rosemary Russell.

The Mayor declared the motion lost and it was **RESOLVED that the Motion be rejected.**

Mayor