

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 18 July 2007 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Hodgkinson (Mayor) Bradshaw, P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, Bryant, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cross, Dennett, Drakeley, Edge, Findon, Fraser, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, Hignett, Hodgkinson, Horabin, Howard, C Inch, D Inch, Jones, Leadbetter, Lewis, Lloyd Jones, Loftus, A. Lowe, J. Lowe McDermott, McInerney, Morley, Nelson, Nolan, Norddahl, Osborne, Parker, Philbin, Polhill, E. Ratcliffe, M Ratcliffe, Redhead, Rowan, Rowe, Sly, Stockton, Swain, Swift, Thompson, Wainwright, Wharton, Whittaker and Wright.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Higginson, Marlow, Murray, Wallace and Worrall.

Absence declared on Council business:

Officers present: L. Cairns, D. Johnson, A. McIntyre, D. Parr, M Simpson, D. Tregae, J. Whittaker and M. Winstanley

Also in attendance: 12 members of the public

Action

COU14 COUNCIL MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

COU15 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- A rope pull of a bell had been presented to the Mayor Councillor John Swain, in August 2006, by the Black Swan Association at its reunion at the Holiday Inn.
- A water colour had been presented to the Mayor Councillor John Swain by the Daniel Adamson Association.
- A Landscape painting of Runcorn Hill had been presented to the Mayor Councillor John Swain by the artist S. Smyth and Halton High School.

- A photo of the Widnes Vikings had been presented to Halton Borough Council.
- A glass bell and tie had presented to Halton Borough Council on 31st May 2007 by Mr James Truett who, 25 years ago, had been the Chief Development Officer for Runcorn Development Corporation (RDC). The bell, which bore the RDC logo, was presented to Mr Truett when the RDC concluded its business.
- A bronze plate had been presented to the delegation on its visit to Tongling in October 2006.
- A bronze ceremonial wine vessel had been presented to the Mayor Councillor Mike Hodgkinson by the president and delegation of Tongling on their visit to Halton in May 2007.
- A C.D. clock made by the Scouts to raise funds for the World Jamboree in Essex, had been presented to the Mayor Councillor Mike Hodgkinson by the North West Cheshire Scouts and Leaders representing Halton at the World Jamboree in Highlands Parl, Essix in August 2007.
- The Civic Service would be held at St Edwards Church, Ivy Street, Runcorn at 9.30am on Sunday 22nd July 2007. Members were invited to attend.

COU16 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader of the Council reported on the following issues:

- Consultation was ongoing regarding a number of issues currently affecting the Borough, such as the Ineos Chlor proposal, Mersey Gateway, the Priory development and Building Schools for the Future (BSF).
- A cross-party group had been set up to look at BSF proposals.
- A report would then be submitted to the Executive Board in September / October in order to comply with the given timetable. Officers and the Children and Young People's portfolio holder were commended on the work carried out so far.

- The North West Regional Assembly was to be disbanded; therefore local authorities in the region would be responsible for agreeing the regional strategy.
- The neighbourhood agenda was being rolled out. Clarity was required as to how this would work; the intention was that this would be where residents' concerns and priorities would be discussed. In addition, there would be a budget to spend.

COU17 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the Minutes of the Executive Board held on 16th May, 7th June and 21st June 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU18 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Executive Board Sub-Committee held on 19th April, 7th June and 21st June 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU19 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE (TRANSMODAL IMPLEMENTATION) SUB-BOARD

The Council considered the Minutes of the Executive (Transmodal Implementation) Sub-Board held on 19th April 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU20 MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the Minutes of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board held on 18th June 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU21 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO.8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

COU22 DECISION MAKING PROCESS - VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATIONS

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, which outlined the need to determine the decision making process to be applied in respect of applications to register Village Greens under the commons Act 2006 and its predecessor the Commons Registration Act 1965.

Members were informed that it was proposed that this decision be made by the Council itself rather than delegated to the Regulatory Committee. It was noted that the Constitution would be amended appropriately to reflect the decision.

RESOLVED: That

1. the decision on an application to register land as a Village Green under the Commons Act 2006 [and its predecessor the Commons Registration Act 1965] be made by the Council; and
2. the Chief Executive be authorised to amend the Constitution appropriately to reflect that determination.

COU23 MERSEY GATEWAY BRIDGE PROJECT - PROGRESS REPORT

The Council received a report, which outlined the progress made in the delivery of Mersey Gateway Bridge Project ("Mersey Gateway"). The Leader outlined the progress made to date, and the benefits the Borough would receive in having a new bridge.

It was reported that, without tolling, there could not be a new crossing. In addition, it was not feasible to toll just one bridge; however, it was hoped that there could be substantial discounts for residents, although no figures could be provided at present.

The following issues were discussed:

- the need for light rail and public transport to cross the New Mersey Gateway;
- whether tolling of the crossings would create a divide between Runcorn and Widnes;
- possible health benefits from the creation of the new bridge; and
- the possibility of capping tolling fees on a daily limit.

Members voted and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That

1. progress made towards delivering the Mersey Gateway Bridge be noted;
2. it be accepted that the financial case for Mersey Gateway Bridge can only be met through a tolling regime that encompasses both bridges, as without tolling the project is not deliverable; and
3. the Council seek to maximise toll discounts for local residents and frequent users.

COU24 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding the appointment of Members to serve on various outside bodies. A document was tabled showing recommendations put forward.

It was reported that there were a number of vacancies which would be filled by the Liberal Democrat group, who were to notify the Chief Executive of their representatives. In addition, Cllr Wainwright thanked Committee Services for their assistance in collecting this information.

RESOLVED: That representatives be appointed to outside bodies in accordance with:

- 1) the tabled report (see appendix to these minutes);
and
- 2) the Liberal Democrat group notify the Chief Executive director of their new representation in respect of the remaining vacancies.

COU25 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS' ANNUAL REPORTS 2006-2007

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy, outlining the Annual Reports of each of the Policy and Performance Boards (PPBs), which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED: That the 2006-2007 Annual Reports submitted from the Policy and Performance Boards be received.

COU26 MINUTES OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

(NB Councillor Horabin declared a personal interest in Minute No. CYP11 due to being a Member of the Governing Body of Simms Cross Primary School.)

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of the Council on 25th April 2007:

Children and Young People
Employment, Learning and Skills
Healthy Halton
Safer Halton
Urban Renewal
Corporate Services
Business Efficiency Board

In receiving the minutes the following was noted:

- The Leader reported that the Council was in receipt of £250,000 from lottery funds to improve the health, well-being and lifestyle of people over 50;
- Councillor Osborne thanked the Members of the Safer Halton PPB for their sterling work and effort given over the year;
- Councillor Gilligan reported that the final Area Forum reviews had now all been completed and thanked the Working Party for their efforts;
- In relation to CS8 with regards to Council wide training provision, the Board considered that there could be reduced administration costs through joint working across departments; and
- In relation to CS7 Councillor Wainwright confirmed that the personal interest declared was his, rather than Councillor Nelson.

COU27 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered reports on the following Committees in the period since the meeting held on 25th April 2007.

Development Control

Standards
Regulatory
Appointments
Statutory Joint Scrutiny



Meeting ended at 7.44 p.m.