

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 13 October 2021 in the Bridge Suite - Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, J. Bradshaw, M. Bradshaw, Bramwell, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Carlin, Dennett, Dourley, Dyer, Fry, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, Loftus, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Philbin, Polhill, Ratcliffe, Rowe, G. Stockton, J. Stockton, Stretch, Aimee Teeling, Angela Teeling, Thompson, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Whitley, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Logan, C. Plumpton Walsh and N. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Parr, I. Leivesley, M. Reaney and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: One member of the press

Action

COU13 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 14 July 2021 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU14 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the commencement of the meeting the Mayor asked Council to stand for a minute's silence in honour of Councillor Howard, who had sadly passed away last month.

Following the minutes's silence, the Mayor made the following announcements:-

- He reported on recent events he and the Mayoress had attended at the Catalyst Museum and Norton Priory Museum; and
- He advised that to raise funds for the Mayor's Charities, a Murder Mystery Night and Christmas Bingo would be held shortly.

COU15 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader highlighted the following issues since the last meeting of the Council:

- Whilst unfortunately Covid 19 is still with us the Council has started to see a return to a degree of normality with the majority of our services running as they did pre-pandemic. It was important that we continued to get the balance right between opening up and learning to live with the virus, whilst maintaining a cautious approach;
- The Borough was in a strong position to drive forward a local recovery with exciting developments taking place, with the successful bid for the Town Deal in Runcorn, complementing the work around the Station Quarter and with progress on the Halton leisure centre in Widnes very soon;
- The biggest challenge the Council faced was financial. The Budget Working Group had been examining in some detail the budget pressures across the various departments of the Council. A detailed examination had taken place, the results of which would be challenging to us. The Council had submitted its views to Government alongside City Region colleagues and colleagues from the Cheshire Sub-Region. Those submissions make clear the serious financial pressures facing local authorities, which had been only exacerbated by the pandemic;
- The Council continued to work closely with NHS partners in developing our response both locally and regionally to the requirements contained in the Health and Care Bill for the creation of an Integrated Care System through an Integrated Care Board, covering Cheshire and Merseyside; and
- I am delighted to see that the Council was shortly to consider granting the Freedom of the Borough to Councillor Polhill. Also you will all be aware that David Parr our Chief Executive has announced that he will be stepping down from his post at the end of March next year. The process to appoint a new Chief Executive to take over from David in April 2022 would begin shortly.

COU16 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings on 15 July 2021 and 16 September 2021.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU17 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 7 July 2021.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU18 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

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

COU19 ATI UK LTD CREMATOR ISSUE AT WIDNES CREMATORIUM

The Council considered the attached report:

RESOLVED: That

1. delegated authority be granted to the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to procure a replacement cremator and associated service and maintenance contract; and
2. Council approves the inclusion of £200,000 in the 2020/22 Capital Programme for the scheme, as outlined in Section 5.0 of the report.

COU20 HALTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Council considered the attached report:

RESOLVED: That the Local Development Scheme 2021 be adopted as a formal part of Halton Borough Council's planning framework.

COU21 2021/22 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That Council approve the revisions to the Council's 2021/22 Capital Programme set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

COU22 ABSENCE OF ELECTED MEMBER

Council were asked to note that Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh and N. Plumpton Walsh have been absent from attending Council meetings for five months due to personal family circumstances.

RESOLVED: That under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, permission is sought for Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh and N. Plumpton Walsh to be granted an extended period of absence from attending Council meetings for a further period of 3 months, concluding on 13 January 2022 .

COU23 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 14 July 2021:-

- Children, Young People and Families;
- Employment, Learning and Skills and Community;
- Health;
- Safer;
- Environment and Urban Renewal;
- Corporate Services; and
- Audit and Governance.

COU24 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 14 July 2021:-

- Development Control;
- Regulatory; and
- Development Management.

COU25 NOTICE OF MOTION - PLANNING REFORMS

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor S. Hill and seconded by Councillor Harris:-

Council notes that the Government has published

highly controversial proposals to reform the planning system. One aspect that has raised particular concern is the proposal to remove local residents' right to object to individual planning applications in their own neighbourhood if the area is zoned for growth or renewal.

The House of Commons has called on the Government to protect residents' rights to retain a voice over planning applications, recognising that the best way to get necessary new homes built was to support communities, councils and developers to work in partnership.

This Council RESOLVES: That planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

The motion was put and carried.

RESOLVED: That the motion be approved.

Meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.