

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting held at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 17th April, 2013 in Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

Present:-

Councillor Clark (Mayor)

Councillors Mrs Ball, Mrs Beattie, Ms Bell, Bradley, Coulton, Crook, Evans, Forrest, Foster, Mrs D Gardner, M Gardner, Mrs Mary Green, Michael Green, Hamman, Hanson, Harrison, Hesketh, Heyworth, Higgins, Mrs Hothersall, Hughes, Mrs Jones, Marsh, Martin, Mrs Moon, Mrs Mort, Mullineaux, Nelson, Mrs Noblet, O'Hare, Otter, Patten, Rainsbury, Robinson, Mrs M Smith, P Smith, Suthers, Titherington, C Tomlinson, M Tomlinson, Miss Walker, Walton, Mrs Woollard and Yates.

In Attendance:-

The Chief Executive (Mike Nuttall), the Democratic Services Manager (Martin O'Loughlin) and the Democratic Services Officer (Carol Eddleston)

Public Attendance:-

5

Other Officers:-

1

Minute No.	Description/Resolution
97	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Bennett, W Bennett, Kelly, Pimblett, Prynn, Stettner and Watts.</p>
98	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Councillor Michael Green declared a personal interest as a County Council Cabinet Member in the Report of the Cabinet, item 4, Consultation Draft - Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Master Plan.</p>
99	<p>Minutes of the meetings held on 27 February 2013 and 6 March 2013</p> <p>In accordance with Standing Order 10 (2) which allowed motions to be raised without notice on the accuracy of minutes, Councillor Foster read out a statement from Councillor Prynn regarding how she believed individual statements made by individual councillors should be minuted. He also read out a request from her for an amendment to the beginning of the third paragraph of page 52 to read: '<u>Cllr Prynn spoke in support of Councillor Foster, pointing out that £2.95 a week was a lot of money to some people on low incomes and that defaulting on council tax payments had serious repercussions for defaulters. With this in mind, each local authority was permitted to make discretionary council tax payments. In addition the local grant given to councils by central government was meant to aid such people and not to be used to fund Parish and Town Councils.</u>'</p> <p>Councillor Crook seconded the motion.</p>

	<p>Councillor Foster said that the Labour Group also wished the Governance Committee to undertake a review of minutes in order to provide Democratic Services with a clear steer on what level of detail members would like to see in minutes.</p> <p>Having considered Councillor Prynne's request in relation to the published minutes, the Mayor said that he did not consider the minutes to be inaccurate and therefore did not believe that they needed to be amended. However, he was quite happy to ask the Governance Committee to review the content and style of council minutes. When the Mayor invited members to vote on the motion Councillor Foster indicated that he would be willing to withdraw it as the Labour Group's request regarding a review of minutes by the Governance Committee was accepted.</p> <p>The Leader joined the Mayor in supporting the request for a review of minutes to be referred to the Governance Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the minutes of the meetings held on 27 February 2013 and 6 March 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor; and 2) the Governance Committee be requested to ask the Constitution Task Group to undertake a review of minutes as part of its 2013/14 work programme.
100	<p>Report of the Cabinet</p> <p>The Leader commended the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 March 2013. The report was seconded.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Foster under item 1, Authorisation of Expenditure of Capital Programme Schemes 2013/14, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Robinson, agreed to ascertain which elements of Contracts Procedure Rules would not be followed in the course of the procurement for works at Moss Side Depot and why they would not be followed.</p> <p>Under item 4, Consultation Draft – Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Master Plan, Councillor Michael Green, in his capacity as a County Council Cabinet Member, thanked the Cabinet for its comments on the need for sustainable public transport, especially in relation to the Test Track development.</p> <p>In relation to item 6, Northbrook Barn, Councillor Titherington extended his thanks to the Cabinet and officers for their work and said he believed that the best outcome for the building and for the community had been achieved.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Council's Constitution (unanimous): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the proposed changes to the Constitution as set out in the Appendices to the report be adopted with effect from the Council meeting on 22 May 2013; and (ii) the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the chairman of the Governance Committee, be authorised to update the Constitution to reflect the outcomes from (i) above. 2) Consultation Draft – Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Master Plan (YES – 44, ABSTENTION – 1) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the response sent on behalf of the Planning Committee be noted; (ii) the additional views expressed in the report be endorsed; and (iii) a further response be sent to the County Council to encapsulate the comments in (i) and (ii) above, together with the comments raised by Cabinet Members at the Cabinet meeting.

	<p>3) Revenues and Benefits Discretionary Policies (unanimous)</p> <p>(i) the updated 'Discretionary Housing Payments Policy' as detailed in Appendix A of the report be adopted;</p> <p>(ii) the updated 'Discretionary Rate Relief Policy' as detailed in Appendix B of the report be adopted; and</p> <p>(iii) powers to make minor administrative changes to the above policies, together with the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme and Exceptional Hardship Policies be delegated to the Director of Business Transformation in consultation with the responsible Cabinet Member.</p>
101	<p>Report of the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Councillor Titherington commended the report of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 March 2013. The report was seconded.</p> <p>Councillor Titherington took the opportunity to thank members of the committee for their support throughout the year. He reported that the work of the Health Inequalities Task Group was ongoing and a workshop held on 8 April, which had attracted in excess of 50 representatives from various partner organisations, had enhanced the prestige of scrutiny.</p>
102	<p>Report of the Governance Committee</p> <p>Councillor O'Hare commended the report of the Governance Committee meeting held on 17 April 2013. The report was seconded.</p> <p>Councillor O'Hare reminded Council that the Constitution Task Group was tasked each year by the Governance Committee to review certain aspects of the Constitution and he said that the committee would welcome suggestions from members on which areas might be appropriate for future reviews.</p>
103	<p>Questions to the Leader</p> <p>Councillor Crook referred to the earlier discussion about minutes, and the issues raised at the meeting on 27 February, and observed that Standing Order 10 (2) of the Constitution allowed members to raise without notice motions relating to the accuracy of the minutes. He asked the Leader if she agreed that all councillors should abide by all Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct, however inconvenient it might be to do so. The Leader acknowledged that she did not have a problem with members challenging the accuracy of minutes but had considered that the way that this had been done at the February meeting had been inappropriate. She said that she supported the request made earlier in the meeting that the Constitution Task Group, via the Governance Committee, should be asked to make recommendations on how meetings should be minuted.</p> <p>Councillor Forrest referred to a recent fatal traffic accident which had occurred following a police chase in Leyland. The incident was being investigated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) but he urged the Leader to speak to Chief Superintendent Williams about whether the borough's roads were appropriate for the police to indulge in that type of activity. The Leader said that the Council took the issue of road safety very seriously and she would be seeing Chief Superintendent Williams in the near future but it was not within her remit to tell the police how they should deal with drivers under pursuit. She was confident that the IPCC would conduct its investigations and deal with the findings in an appropriate manner.</p>

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Questions to Members of the Cabinet

Deputy Leader, Neighbourhoods and Street Scene

Councillor Heyworth thanked Councillor Mullineaux and relevant officers for their work in helping to identify the source of pollution in Cricketers' Brook. He expressed concern about the lack of regular cleaning and tidying by United Utilities of the substation on Yarrow Road. Discarded bottles and plastic bags containing food could soon attract rats and United Utilities had a duty of care in terms of the local surroundings. Considering the profits that the company generated it was surely not inconceivable that it could install CCTV at this location. He again thanked officers for their efforts to contact United Utilities to encourage them to resolve the situation. Councillor Mullineaux welcomed the comments about the work at Cricketers' Brook. In relation to the substation on Yarrow Road, he confirmed that the council had contacted United Utilities about this issue on a number of occasions but would try and increase pressure on the company to take action.

Councillor Forrest said that he had recently attended a 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign roadshow and had brought back some interesting publications which he would commend to members. Councillor Mullineaux said that he had not seen the publications but acknowledged that the more people who knew about the campaign, the better.

In response to concerns expressed by Councillor Hanson about ongoing issues of parking on double yellow lines in Bamber Bridge and a request for increased parking enforcement patrols, Councillor Mullineaux said that traffic wardens were doing their best to try and identify culprits but he would continue to monitor the situation.

Councillor Martin asked whether it was true that no improvement works would be carried out at Hurst Grange Park for up to three years. Councillor Mullineaux pointed out that there was a rolling programme in terms of the borough's parks and Hurst Grange Park would reach the top of the programme in around two to three years' time.

Finance and Resources

Councillor Evans enquired whether the council was in breach of any equality legislation by imposing a flat rate reduction of £2.95 per week on benefit claimants of working age. Councillor Robinson said that this had been looked into by the council and by central government and, as far as he was aware, there was no breach nor had there been any challenge from an equality perspective. If policy had to change due to any government error that came to light in the future, the council would respond accordingly.

Referring to the earlier discussion about utility substations, Councillor C Tomlinson enquired whether any of the funds budgeted for CCTV coverage in the Council's budget might be used to install CCTV around substations. Councillor Robinson was clear that the council would not use its funds to install CCTV in areas which were not the responsibility of this council. He was sure that local residents would prefer this. Responding to a further comment from Councillor C Tomlinson that CCTV could act as a deterrent to copper thieves who might subsequently be injured within the confines of a substation, Councillor Robinson pointed out that the council was not the guardian of the general public in everything nor could potential dangers to thieves be laid at the feet of this council.

Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities

Councillor Martin enquired what action would be taken to tackle problems at Penwortham Leisure Centre reported in the local press. Councillor P Smith explained that an individual customer had raised some issues via email but unfortunately the emails had been sent to an incorrect address. These had now been received by the appropriate personnel and

	<p>the customer had been spoken to. Further conversations would be had with the customer when a full investigation had been carried out.</p> <p>Shared Services and Corporate Support</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Harrison about a publication recently circulated to members about Welfare Reform, Councillor Hamman said that the information was being condensed into a small leaflet which would be available in Gateway from early the following week. Members would be welcome to take a number of copies to distribute to local residents if they wished.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Housing</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor C Tomlinson about the former service station on Canberra Road, Councillor Hughes said that he had no update on the likely timescales for its development by Tesco but would make enquiries with the Planning team.</p> <p>Councillor Martin enquired whether there was an update on the demolition programme at the Maltings in Penwortham. Councillor Hughes explained that formal approval for demolition would have to be sought from the council and details of that would be put into the public domain when it was received. The Council would be involved in discussions with about future use of the site.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Nelson about the Bridge Inn in Walton-le-Dale, Councillor Hughes confirmed that a planning application had been received to demolish the public house and to build a three-storey nursery with a flat above. He was not aware if the building was listed but was sure that Planning could confirm this.</p>
105	<p>Questions to Chairmen of Committees and My Neighbourhood Areas</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>
106	<p>Questions to Representatives on Outside Bodies</p> <p>There were no questions to Outside Bodies.</p>

The meeting finished at 6.55pm.

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