

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

Meeting held at 6.00pm on Wednesday, 19 November, 2014 in Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

Present:

Councillor Mr J G Walton (in the chair)

Councillors Mrs A A Ball, Ms J Bell, Mr S Bennett, Mr W L Bennett, Mr M A Bradley, Mr C J Clark, Mr C Coulton, Mr C S Crook, Mr W Evans, Mr D B Forrest, Mr P A Foster, Mrs D A Gardner, Mr M Gardner, Mrs M Green, Mr M A Green, Mr D J Harrison, Mr J Hesketh, Mr D Howarth, Mr J C Hughes, Mr K E L Jones, Mrs S Jones, Mr J A Kelly, Mr J D Marsh, Mr K J Martin, Mrs C J Moon, Mrs J A Mort, Mr P Mullineaux, Mr M R Nelson, Mrs R J Noblet, Mr G O'Hare, Mr A F Ogilvie, Mr J W M Otter, Mr J Patten, Mr A E Pimblett, Ms S M Prynne, Mr J Rainsbury, Mr S M Robinson, Mrs M R Smith, Mr P J Smith, Mr P G R Stettner, Mr D H Suthers, Mr M J Titherington, Mr C W Tomlinson, Mr M V Tomlinson, Vacancy, Miss F A Walker, Mr D J Watts, Mrs L R Woollard and Mr B Yates

Honorary Freeman Breakell

In Attendance:

The Chief Executive (Mike Nuttall), the Director of Governance and Business Transformation (Ian Parker) and the Democratic Services Officer (Dave Lee)

Public Attendance: 3 and 1 press

Other Officers: 4

Minute No.	Description/Resolution
51	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Beattie, Hamman, Heyworth, Higgins and Mrs Hothersall.</p>
52	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Councillor K Jones declared an interest as he was a school governor of Penwortham Priory Academy. Councillor Martin declared an interest in Items 5, 6 and 7 [min nos.54, 55 and 56] because he was employee of Lancashire County Council.</p>
53	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>RESOLVED (unanimously) that: The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.</p>
54	<p>Report of the Cabinet</p> <p>The Leader commended the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 November 2014.</p>

The report was seconded.

Worden Park Vision Plan

Councillor Evans asked whether every effort was being made to best utilise the buildings and facilities at Worden Park as a resident was unable to organise an event recently at the park because there were no caretakers available. Councillor Walker indicated that she understood that the decision had not yet been made and the matter was still ongoing.

Councillor M Tomlinson welcomed the aspirations of the Vision Plan together with some good suggestions for the next 20 years however he was disappointed with the length of time it had taken to arrive at this stage as it had been over a year since Scrutiny Committee did a review on Worden Park. He commented on the details within the report and added that he would like to have seen some SMART targets for the park, some of these being; what was to be done; when it was going to be done; and how it was funded.

The Cabinet Member concurred with Councillor Walker's response provided to Councillor Evans. In respect of Councillor M Tomlinson's comments, he explained that a lot of hard work had been undertaken and there were things already set out within the Vision Plan with costings being taken into account. He added that although this was a long term vision for the park however there could be things happening in a few years that may prevent some of the aims being achieved. The plan had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee.

Penwortham Improvements

Councillor Prynne asked the Cabinet Member whether he could detail the consultations that have been taken place with Penwortham Town Council with regard to the Penwortham Improvements Scheme (i.e. Liverpool Road) and whether a full response had been received. Councillor Martin asked the Cabinet Member whether the scheme had taken into consideration the longer term development and impact associated with the Penwortham Bypass. He was concerned that variations may have to be made to the improved area if the bypass and associated traffic/pedestrian conditions change.

Councillor Howarth commended the Community Works Manager and his team and the county council for working together to progress some of these schemes. He also commended the Leader for bringing the works forward as a result of obtaining additional funding. Councillor Howarth then referred to the former government buildings and reports of vandalism caused by youths at the site. He asked the Cabinet Member if any action could be taken by Environmental Health to ascertain whether these reports were correct and carry out a risk assessment.

In response to Councillor Prynne, the Cabinet Member stated that he could not confirm what consultations have taken place with Penwortham Town Council however he was aware that there were substantial consultations/contributions at the My Neighbourhood meetings that were attended by town council members/officers. The Cabinet Member also informed the meeting that Councillor Robinson gave an informative presentation at a My Neighbourhood meeting. The Cabinet Member felt that all stakeholders had contributed to the scheme.

Responding to Councillor Martin, the Cabinet Member explained that the scheme would not impact on the future development of the Penwortham Bypass. All this would enhance the area and provide economic benefits. Leading onto Councillor Howarth's question, the Cabinet Member further explained that one of the borough's key supermarket operators (together with the council) was to develop the site and enhance Penwortham under a particular project. Unfortunately this land had subsequently been sold to another key supermarket operator. In view of the length of continued uncertainty of the site, it was felt that improvements to Penwortham were much needed and that the works could not be delayed any longer. Key issues were identified following a number of site inspections by

	<p>local Councillors and a list was drawn up which was put forward to My Neighbourhood for consideration (this was where the consultation had taken place). The Cabinet Member concluded that it was a real bonus to have secured the City Deal money which the council had been working on for some while. To gain another £100,000 on top of the £110,000 would make a substantial difference to the lighting/pavements in the area.</p> <p>In respect of the reports of vandalism caused by youths at the former government buildings, the Cabinet Member agreed to investigate the concerns raised.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>1) the report be noted [unanimously]</p> <p>2) Technical Updates Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme [unanimously]</p> <p>i. delegated authority be granted to the Director of Governance and Business Transformation in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Shared Services and Corporate Support to make all necessary updates to this council's Council Tax Support Scheme to comply with any prescribed requirements that may be issued by central government. This may be by the making of specific regulations as in 2013 or by amendment to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and 2012;</p> <p>ii. delegated authority be granted to the Director of Governance and Business Transformation in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Shared Services and Corporate Support to make all necessary amendments to the council's scheme to uprate the allowances and premiums in accordance with Revised HB Circular when it is issued in December 2014/January 2015 by the DWP. This process is a requirement of the prescribed elements of the scheme;</p> <p>iii. the updated scheme in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 2012 be publicised; and</p> <p>iv. the level of the deduction to be applied to Working Age recipients of Council Tax Support from the 1 April 2015 be finalised and agreed in accordance with South Ribble's Scheme and as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Setting at the Council Meeting on the 4 March 2015. This figure will continue to be within the range consulted upon during the introduction and implementation of the council's scheme in 2012.</p> <p>3) Worden Park Vision Plan [unanimously] The Worden Park Vision Plan be adopted.</p> <p>4) Extension of Existing Insurance Long Term Agreements [unanimously] The extension of the council's Long Term Agreements as set out in the terms of the report be approved.</p>
55	<p>Report of the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Councillor Titherington commended the reports of the Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 23 September and 28 October 2014. The reports were seconded.</p> <p>(During the course of the meeting, Councillor P J Smith referred to the report and asked the reason why the county council's Scrutiny Committee had declined to be involved in the Road Casualties and Deaths Task Group. He was surprised at the response given the amount of road deaths in Lancashire).</p> <p>Councillor Titherington indicated that he understood that this was a possibility of a joint review with the county council on road safety and at present it did not quite fit with their workplan. He would investigate the matter and provide Councillor P J Smith with a response.</p>
56	<p>Report of the Governance Committee</p> <p>Councillor W Bennett commended the report of the Governance Committee meeting held</p>

	<p>on 24 September 2014. The report was seconded. (Councillor W Bennett particularly highlighted to members the excellent External Audit - Audit Findings Report).</p>
57	<p>Questions to the Leader</p> <p>Councillor M Tomlinson asked whether there was anything the Leader could share with the council following recent reports over a new ‘Super Council for Lancashire’.</p> <p>Councillor M Tomlinson informed the meeting that he was aware that discussions had been held in Liverpool on the possibility of having an elected Mayor for the whole Merseyside region. Councillor M Tomlinson commented that there would be movement if all the Leaders of the county, district and unitary councils in Lancashire discussed this. He felt that this would almost certainly be one of the most important things this council would be asked to consider over the next 12/18 months.</p> <p>The Leader explained that she attended a District Leaders meeting and the item was put on the agenda as a matter of urgent business. Up to then the matter had not actually surfaced. Prior to that, she had attended a meeting in Clitheroe with the District Leaders where there had been discussions concerning suggestions made by Blackburn MP Jack Straw that the district councils around the Eastern area (some of these being Rossendale, Burnley, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley) should consider forming a Unitary Authority for the Eastern area of Lancashire. The Leader felt that recent negotiations and events in Merseyside (Liverpool) and Greater Manchester promoted the thought of Combined/Unitary Authorities. The Leader of the county council had scheduled a couple of meetings to take place between the end of November and the first week in December 2014. A number of guests had been invited to attend the initial meeting including both Derbyshire and Nottingham County Councils who were already planning county-scale combined authorities (both would include a Unitary Authority). The Leader assumed that the District Leaders’ meetings scheduled in the first week in December 2014 would almost certainly discuss what went on at its meeting at the end of November 2014 and how they wished to proceed after that.</p> <p>The Leader added that she had received paperwork on what a Combined Authority actually means and she was happy to share this information with members of the council. The Leader briefly explained the structure of a Combined Authority and how different it was to a Unitary Authority (together with devolved powers and funding through Parliament). The Leader continued to explain that the area of Lancashire was a big combination and careful consideration would need to be given on how the most appropriate model of governance would fit in the 12 district councils, 2 unitary councils and the county council. It was envisaged that Combined Authorities would take between 18 months and 2 years to come to fruition.</p> <p>The Leader was happy for a Members’ Learning Hour to be arranged after the background information had been circulated to members.</p> <p>Councillor W Bennett referred to a previous council meeting in which Councillor Foster stated that the Labour Group was working on some strategic plans and that these would be announced in the future. Councillor W Bennett wondered whether the Leader had seen these plans yet. Subsequently, Councillor Foster then asked the Leader whether she felt that it was appropriate for the Labour Group to share its plans.</p> <p>The Leader said that she did recall Councillor Foster’s comments and confirmed that as yet she had not seen any proposed strategic plans from the Labour Group. The Leader was happy to receive this when the Labour Group was ready to share this information with her.</p>

	<p>Councillor M Tomlinson thanked the Leader for the detailed response. He assured the Leader that members would welcome sight of the paperwork that she had been privy to. Councillor M Tomlinson felt that the economy of Lancashire was larger than Merseyside. He stressed that it was really important that this authority was at the forefront of the debate and not just a poor relation of the shire counties. He suggested that it might be useful to liaise with Cumbria County Council.</p>
58	<p>Questions to Members of the Cabinet</p> <p><i>Deputy Leader and Neighbourhoods & Street Scene</i></p> <p>Councillor Howarth asked the Cabinet Member whether he was aware that there was a leaflet currently circulating containing quotes from members of the Conservative Group regarding waste collection.</p> <p>Councillor Howarth explained that one of those quotes was from Councillor Gardener which stated, "To make it perfectly clear, we have no plans to impose a 'bin tax' on local residents to collect your garden waste."</p> <p>Councillor Howarth indicated that as the Cabinet Member may not have any current plans, as it stood this was still a possibility for raising revenue in the future.</p> <p>To make it absolutely clear, Councillor Howarth asked the Cabinet Member to give a categoric assurance that while the council was in the control of the Conservative Group, either now or at any time in the future that he would not impose any additional charges for the collection of green waste.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member indicated that as far as this council was concerned he can categorically confirm that no charges would be imposed on green waste from this council. He added that he did previously explain that the council would be looking at new contracts.</p> <p>Councillor Crook informed the Cabinet Member that in the last couple of years he had received a number of representations from residents in his ward over the lack of park benches. He understood that benches were removed in all areas in the borough as result of problems with youths and antisocial behaviour activities. Although one bench had been returned to his ward within 12 months after he had made several requests, other benches have not yet been reinstated because of antisocial behaviour activities. Councillor Crook asked the Cabinet Member if he agreed that the removal of the park benches were more of a punishment to residents rather than youths/teenagers. Given that the amount of time that had now lapsed since the last report of youth/teenage nuisance in these areas, he asked whether the Cabinet Member was prepared to reinstate these benches for the benefit of local people (some of these being elderly, disabled, or infirm that rely heavily on these facilities).</p> <p>The Cabinet Member noted the comments made by Councillor Crook and felt that if there was a possibility of reinstalling the benches he would endeavour to return them as soon as practicable.</p> <p>Councillor Titherington, referred the Cabinet Member to a question that he had asked at a previous council meeting, and wondered whether he was in a position to clarify exactly how the notice of motion on blacklisting (min. no. 60, 20 November 2013 refers) was applied and complied with in relation to the tender process of the car park in Worden Park. The Cabinet Member confirmed he would respond in writing to Councillor Titherington on this matter.</p> <p>Councillor C Tomlinson thanked the Cabinet Member for his reply to a question however he wondered whether the Cabinet Member thought it was acceptable to provide a response 6</p>

weeks after he had asked the question. Councillor C Tomlinson felt that it was not a difficult question. The Cabinet Member indicated that although he appreciated the length of time it had taken however he had received a response.

Finance & Resources

Councillor Patten referred to the report of the Governance Committee that was considered earlier in the meeting and he asked the Cabinet Member whether he could provide an estimated cost of using officers' time to complete the work on the external audit.

The Cabinet Member indicated that Councillor Patten's question was raised at a recent Governance Committee meeting and that it had already been alluded to by Councillor W Bennett. The auditors were under a lot of pressure to complete the work within the statutory time limits and he was made aware that some staff time had to be incurred at weekends (for example when some of the audit testing had to take place). He was not aware of how much time was incurred and what the actual costs were, however he agreed that he would investigate the matter.

Councillor Pimblett commented that as the Cabinet Member would be aware, the council changed its position on support for the protection of the 'Blue Route' to complete the Penwortham bypass in favour of protecting the 'Brown Route' as the means of delivering the City Deal infrastructure. Councillor Pimblett wondered if the Cabinet Member could advise the council whether he considered his support for the 'Brown Route' essential for the economic growth of the borough.

The Cabinet Member indicated that the 'Blue and Brown Routes' were part of the City Deal and that was a matter for the county council. Unfortunately he had no influence over this under his portfolio.

Regeneration, Leisure & Healthy Communities

Councillor M Green referred the Cabinet Member to Global Entrepreneurship Week as international auditors had recently revealed that South Ribble was top of the tree for job creation in Lancashire and the North West and in the top 5% of regions across the country. The borough had nearly 11,000 new jobs and as many were created in South Ribble as in Manchester and Liverpool combined over the last 8 years period. With many positive comments and players such as Waitrose, Roundhouse Properties, BAE Systems and the Chambers of Commerce, he asked whether the Cabinet Member agreed that entrepreneurs could learn a great deal of what was happening in South Ribble.

The Cabinet Member commented that the great thing about entrepreneurs was that they have positive thoughts and minds. They look and embrace ideas for growth and the future. South Ribble had lots and lots of entrepreneurs that had been embracing ideas over the last 8 years. The Cabinet Member concurred with Councillor M Green's comments and stated that the council was always willing to help businesses some of these being, preparing to talk to people; listen to people; and visit all large businesses. The council also showed interest in what they were doing and try and understand what they were doing. This information was passed onto residents and the council monitor the employment level to ensure they employ people from South Ribble.

Councillor K Jones indicated that Serco announced last week that it was exiting all its leisure and environmental contracts because of financial difficulties. He asked the Cabinet Member what the current position was in respect the major contracts the council had with Serco Leisure .He asked whether the Cabinet Member agreed that the council should take these contracts back in-house.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the council had legal binding contracts with Serco and

the Leisure Trust. As far as he was concerned the contracts remained in place at this point in time and it would be up to Serco to manage that at some stage. Other than the recent press reports of the stock exchange there had not been a meeting with the council. He had noted the concerns and risks and if there were potential new owners then the opportunities/ideas would be explored and that they would be shared with the council.

Councillor Titherington asked the Cabinet Member when he would be in a position to share with the council the Chorley and South Ribble Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Cabinet Member indicated that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy would almost certainly be reformed. He was aware that a meeting would take place shortly to discuss a wider Health and Wellbeing Partnership that would include the area of Preston (including areas of Ribble Valley and Wyre). The Cabinet Member felt that it had worked very well and was very effective and as soon as further information had been received he would share this information with the council. After a subsequent question from Councillor Titherington in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy detailed in the 6 months monitoring report under point 11 of the list of successes and achievements, the Cabinet Member agreed to provide a copy of the current strategy to Councillor Titherington.

Councillor Pimblett asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that the generation of companies coming to South Ribble was because of the excellent road/motorway connections (M61, M65, M6, M55) which all cut across around the Walton Summit area that linked to the East, North and South. South Ribble was an easy place to travel to and from.

The Leader commented that she attended a meeting at Leyland Hotel and she said that the Managing Director of the Feathers Group was more than complimentary of how helpful this council was. The Leader commended Leyland DAF and Waitrose for sealing contracts at Leyland Hotel recently which demonstrated how well the business partnerships were within this borough. The Leader felt that it was not just road links but how the council operated to help capture businesses. Visits to companies were made on regular basis to ensure they were aware that the council was open for business and was there to help them.

Councillor M Tomlinson felt that South Ribble was not all about the council and the roads/transport network but it was about the borough's history, location, the county council, fantastic schools and the education system etc. He added that all of these contributed to what was undoubtedly a good news story and it was important to not lose sight of that. Notwithstanding that South Ribble was 'a great place to do business' partly because of the transport links but he felt that this was also partly because of the history of skilled workers and all of those other things that contributed to make the local economy successful.

Strategic Planning & Housing

Councillor Mrs Moon asked the Cabinet Member whether he considered the council's approach in its delivery of housing was complacent (in particular to affordable housing) following a statement made by Councillor Foster. Councillor Mrs Moon presented some facts that in the first 6 months of the financial year the total number of houses built exceeded the yearly target on affordable housing. The council had approved a further 134 (120 were minded for approval subject to section 106 agreements) that was in excess of 250 for approval. Subsequently, Councillor M Tomlinson commented that a person desperately waiting to move into an affordable home could not move into one that had planning permission but had not yet been built.

Councillor Hughes confirmed that the council's approach in its delivery of all aspects housing was not complacent. Although there were peaks and troughs of building developments, the council worked very hard to continue to encourage developers to invest in the borough. Although the council could not build houses but its biggest aim was to clear

	<p>the backlog of people that did not have homes. The council had just completed the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) for the next 10/15 years. The council continued to do what it could in respect of affordable housing.</p> <p>Councillor Martin indicated that he was fully aware that in some cases with Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications, there may be a need by the resident to contribute to the work that may be needed to assist them to remain in their home. There would however be some that would not have the money to hand. He asked the Cabinet Member if the council would set aside a fund to assist these residents to enable them to have the work completed to help keep them in their home. Councillor Martin understood that another provider of DFG did this.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member indicated that he understood the problem and again reminded members the council's position/role in the process of DFGs and its Assistance Policy 2014. The government provided the council with a grant to help vulnerable people with disabilities and there were strict rules which the council had to take on board.</p> <p>The Eligibility for Grant Work National Legislation set out the maximum grant available (inclusive of all charges and fees). All applications would be subject to a national test of financial resources as set out in the provisions of the legislation. The test would determine what amount if any, disabled occupants would have to contribute to the costs of the works.</p> <p>In accordance with the guidelines the council would not approve any assistance until it was satisfied that full funding was in place. The council would refer all applicants to the Lancashire County Council's Hardship Fund where applicants were able to submit a request for funding to contribute to the work. If this was not an option then they would be referred under Preston Care and Repair who are able to contact various bodies and different charities to try to secure the relevant funding on behalf of the applicant. For the reasons as reported, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the council would not be setting up a grant however it would continue to help and assist applicants in need of support as far as this council was concerned.</p> <p>Councillor Martin asked the Cabinet Member if there was any progress in respect of The Maltings. The Cabinet Member indicated that there was no further development in respect of The Maltings however he was aware that a meeting would take place in due course.</p>
59	<p>Questions to Chairmen of Committees and My Neighbourhood Areas</p> <p>Councillor Howarth referred Councillor Nelson (chairman of the Standards Committee) to the Code of Conduct for Elected Members, and in particular paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Introduction which stated –</p> <p>'Members conduct and what the public believe about their conduct will affect the reputation and credibility of Members and the Council as a whole.'</p> <p>You should always conduct yourselves in a way which will maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of this council and should never undertake any action which would bring this Authority, or its Members and Officers generally, into disrepute.'</p> <p>Councillor Howarth also referred Councillor Nelson to section C General Obligations paragraph 1 which stated, 'You should always treat others with respect'.</p> <p>Councillor Howarth explained that on the bottom of the Liberal Democrat newsletter, in</p>

	<p>which they reported the outcome of their motion to council on possible green waste charges, he was clearly stated as the publisher and promoter. Likewise on the bottom of the Conservative Penwortham newsletter, it was clearly stated as being promoted by Councillor Phil Smith. There could be no confusion that in a Conservative article regarding a possible waste green waste charge, he was accused by Councillor Smith the promoter, in the headline of the article of being a liar.</p> <p>Councillor Howarth indicated that there was nothing in his article that was in any way untrue, and Councillor Smith by his actions had shown a complete lack of respect, had called into question my reputation and credibility, and in so doing had brought this authority and one of its members into disrepute.</p> <p>Councillor Howarth asked whether Councillor Nelson would call on Councillor Smith to stand up and issue a full public apology, or was he compelled to waste valuable officer and member time by pursuing a formal complaint and investigation.</p> <p>Councillor Nelson felt that it would not be appropriate for him to respond at this stage however he was happy to investigate the matters raised.</p> <p>During the course of the meeting a member of the public raised a number of issues in respect of his ward. Unfortunately the matters were raised under the incorrect place in the proceedings and officers agreed to investigate the matters and provide him with a response direct.</p>
60	<p>Questions to Member Champions and Representatives on Outside Bodies</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Ball asked Councillor Ogilvie (Armed Forces Champion) whether he had an update on the heritage bid for the WW1 Memorial.</p> <p>Councillor Ogilvie referred to the Centenary Fields in the report of the Cabinet report (considered earlier in the meeting by this council) and explained how this was an important part of the heritage lottery bid to support the longer term development of the Borough Memorial subject to match funding from the council. Councillor Ogilvie thanked the chairmen of My Neighbourhood forums for their agreement for the contributions of £3,000 and also the unanimous support of the allocation of section 106 funds from each part of the borough towards the war memorial. The bid had been submitted and it was envisaged that a decision would be made in January 2015.</p> <p>Councillor Ogilvie referred to Remembrance Sunday weekend and commented how important it was to remember the sacrifices that were made. He took the opportunity to thank all those involved in the events across the borough.</p> <p>Councillor C Tomlinson indicated that as Christmas was approaching, he asked his fellow Councillor M Green if he agreed to urge council to seek applications for the Alice Rawlinson's Charity. Councillor M Green concurred with Councillor C Tomlinson's comments and indicated that the charity existed for a number of years to help widows in the Leyland area who may be short of cash at Christmas time. He asked if anybody that resided in Leyland to encourage any applications to come forward and the Trustees would then deal with requests accordingly. It was a very small amount of money.</p>
61	<p>Notice of Motion</p> <p>Notice of the following motion, to be proposed by Councillor M Tomlinson and seconded by Councillor Foster, had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 9(2).</p>

"South Ribble Borough Council recognises that smoking and tobacco is the single largest preventable cause of ill health, premature death and health inequalities in the communities it serves.

Smoking kills over 1,600 people aged 35 years and over in Lancashire each year, which is greater than the total number of deaths from alcohol, obesity, illegal drugs, murder, suicide, road traffic accidents and HIV infection combined (London Health Observatory, 2011; The Information Centre for Health and Social Care, 2012).

This Council therefore agrees to commit to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control in order to protect successive generations of young people from the harm done by tobacco, save lives and reduce health inequalities in our communities. Council instructs the Chief Executive to convey the resolution of this council to our MEP'S asking them to support the principle by opposing moves by 9 EU member states to reintroduce direct subsidies to tobacco farmers in Europe."

In presenting the motion, Councillor M Tomlinson rose to say that it was a lengthy Notice of Motion but he thought it useful to include some of the context on the terrible price the communities pay because of the ill health caused by addiction to smoking within the wording.

The motivation for bringing this motion was sparked by his attendance at a training event called Health Advocacy for Elected Members. It was held in the Civic Centre and, along with members of both the Labour Group and the Conservatives from this council and members of other district councils from across Lancashire, he was able to hear from a range of professionals involved in the promotion of what was known as Public Health.

He found the whole two days fascinating, and knew that the feedback from other South Ribble members was very complimentary.

The presentation which made most impact on him was on Smoking Cessation ie the work which public health officials did to try and encourage people to reduce and then eliminate their smoking habits.

He asked members to note from the motion that research showed that over 1600 people died prematurely in Lancashire. Last year the figure was 1673. He found this to be quite shocking. This was more than the number of people who died from alcohol abuse, obesity, illegal drug use, murder, suicide, HIV and road traffic accidents combined, that would then surely underline what a killer smoking was. Deaths from smoking related diseases tend to be prolonged and unpleasant affairs and were accompanied by long periods of ill health where interventions from Social Care and Health professionals were needed more and more.

The cost of smoking to the Lancashire economy was estimated to be around £316.6m per year (this included NHS costs, sick days, lost productivity and the cost of house fires). He was interested to note that despite the urban myth about taxes on tobacco propping up the Health Service, even if every single penny raised by taxation on tobacco in Lancashire stayed in Lancashire, some £273.4 m, there would still be a shortfall of £43.2m per year. He did some further research, hoping that somehow South Ribble residents would be spared the worst of these Lancashire wide figures. Sadly, that hope was not realised. In fact, South Ribble had 188 premature deaths last year which were directly attributable to the harmful effects of smoking - statistically more than the fair share of Lancashire's total of 1673. Smoking was more prevalent across Lancashire than the rest of England and there was emerging evidence that the number of young smokers in South Ribble was on the rise.

Whilst the statistics were as chilling as they were he said that he was enough of a pragmatist to realise that, for the foreseeable future, some people would continue to smoke. The Smoking Ban in pubs had had a positive effect on many people's behaviour and the Labour Group welcomed the movement which seek to ban smoking in children's play areas. However, smoking remained a perfectly legal activity and an outright ban was neither practical nor likely. What could be done though was to seek to educate people about the price of long term smoking, both in financial terms and in terms of their health, whilst at the same time ensuring that all public sector bodies did what they could to reduce the take up of this addictive practice.

He indicated that this was the reason why the Labour Group would like this council to sign up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

The Declaration asked that its signatories

- "1. Act at a local level to support work being done to reduce smoking and to raise the profile of health inequalities
 2. Work with partners and local communities to address the impact of tobacco use
 3. Participate in local and regional networks
 4. Support the government in taking action to assist local authorities reduce smoking prevalence
 5. Not accept partnerships, services, payments, offers of research or gifts in kind from the tobacco industry
 6. Publicly declare the Council's commitment to reducing smoking by joining the Smoke free Action Coalition."

He added that these commitments would have no financial impact on the council. He would suggest that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities could do most of any necessary extra work himself. But what it would do would send a message to all the council's staff and partners that Tobacco Control was viewed as an important step in improving Health and reducing poverty across the borough.

Over 300 councils across the country had now signed up to the Declaration. It had been adopted by Lancashire County Council, the unitary councils of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Of the district councils in Lancashire three, Preston, Hyndburn and Rossendale had already signed up to the Declaration and six others were committed to doing so. Furthermore, the Declaration had been endorsed by Anna Soubry MP, the then Conservative Minister for Public Health, the Chief Executive of Public Health England, the Government's Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and numerous other specialists in the field of Health promotion. District councils may not have a statutory duty to promote public health but, as in many things, they could be best placed to work in partnership with others to deliver real change for their communities.

Councillor M Tomlinson hoped that the council would recognise the cost to its communities of the effects of long term smoking and agree that, even if in a small way, South Ribble Borough Council could contribute to the work which was being done to minimise those costs.

Councillor Foster rose to say that the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control had a stated intent of protecting successive generations of young people from the harm caused by tobacco, saving lives and reducing health inequalities. There could surely be no councillors sat within this chamber that could not wholeheartedly support this motion.

He stated that the validated facts surrounding this product were stark:

- Smoking cost the NHS in England £2bn a year treating the diseases caused by it;
- Smoking materials remain the main cause for fatal accidental fires in the home, accounting for 82 deaths and 671 casualties in Great Britain in 2012/13;
- Smoking was the primary cause of preventable illness and death. Every year smoking caused about 100,000 deaths in the UK
- Smokers under the age of 40 had a 5 times greater risk of heart attack than non-smokers;
- Smoking causes around 80% of deaths from lung cancer, around 80% of deaths from Bronchitis and Emphysema;
- In fact more than one quarter of all cancer deaths could be attributed to smoking – an astonishing statistic

He added that as councillors had a duty to prevent successive generations of young people dying prematurely. Two thirds of smokers started before the age of 18 and in 2011 it was estimated that more than 200,000 children aged 11-15 started smoking. As an Authority it must do everything it could to protect the population and any EU policy to reintroduce direct subsidies had no place within progressive politics.

Health Inequalities within the borough were already stark, and addressing the imbalances between affluent and impoverished areas was an absolute priority for the Labour Group, as it should be for the council. Professor Sir Michael Marmot chaired an independent review into the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities in England in 2010, titled 'Fair Society Healthy Lives', and stated that 'Tobacco control is central to any strategy to tackle health inequalities'.

He stressed that it was clear, beyond any doubt, that the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control was a step in the right direction and something that this council should have no hesitation in fully supporting it.

Councillor Marsh said that any initiative to tackle the tobacco industry was to be encouraged. He felt that it was a really good idea and commended Councillor M Tomlinson for bringing this motion to the council.

Councillor Pimblett said that although he used to sell cigarettes he had never been a smoker but had seen the downside of smoking. He went on to say that the major problem at present was people smoking at home with young children and that he felt that second hand smoking was really dangerous to young children and babies. He said that he would wholeheartedly support the motion.

Councillor O'Hare said that like many other members he would wholeheartedly support the motion. He referred to the usage of EU and government finances to the best effect and how he felt that the reintroduction of direct subsidies in the tobacco industry was not a working subsidy. He went on to say that he agreed that tobacco was dangerous to health and he did not think that there were any medical facts that would contest that. He felt that the motion could contain further details on what actions the council could take practically in this borough some of these being, extending the smoking ban to other places (council's properties and parks); lobby (maybe not just lobbying the EU); feasibility of raising the legal age limit to smoke etc.

Councillor M Tomlinson indicated that he was delighted by the warm words towards this motion. He pointed out that he too had a business that sold cigarettes and he made it clear earlier that smoking and selling cigarettes were totally legal. He was particularly delighted that the Conservative Group was to support the motion. He added that he did not make the motion more detailed because he felt that it was the Cabinet Member's responsibility when the council signed up to declaration. He also went on to say that he did not put too much

	<p>information in the motion because he did not wish to prolong the debate which may result in an amendment. He concluded that “A journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step and the first step was to sign up to the declaration”.</p> <p>The Mayor invited the meeting to vote on the proposed motion.</p> <p>RESOLVED (unanimously) that: The motion be carried.</p>
62	<p>Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places</p> <p>The Leader presented a report detailing the recent review of polling districts and the proposals for the polling places that would be used for all future elections from the Parliamentary, Borough and Parish/Town Council elections on 7 May 2015. The report was seconded.</p> <p>RESOLVED (unanimously) that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the polling districts and polling places as indicated in the schedule be confirmed. 2. if any relevant comments are received as part of the consultation exercise which may require an amendment to the schedule, a report be presented to Council on 21 January 2015. 3. the Chief Executive be authorised to determine any unforeseen changes to polling places which become necessary for future elections. 4. the council extend its thanks to James Wallwork (Democratic Services Officer) for his excellent work in the borough’s polling districts and polling places review.

The meeting finished at 7.56pm

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