

Council Minutes

Date: 27 July 2015

Time: 6.30 - 7.55 pm

PRESENT: Councillor I L McEnnis (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, Mrs S Adoh, K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, Miss S Brown, H Bull, D J Carroll, M P Davy, C Etholen, R Farmer, R Gaffney, S Graham, A R Green, M Harris, M A Hashmi, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, D A Johncock, Mrs G A Jones, D Knights, Mrs J D Langley, A Lee, H L McCarthy, R Newman, B E Pearce, G Peart, S K Raja, R Raja, S Saddique, J A Savage, R J Scott, D A C Shakespeare OBE, N J B Teesdale, Mrs J E Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner, Ms J D Wassell, D M Watson, C Whitehead, L Wood and Ms K S Wood

Also Present: Honorary Aldermen J M Blanksby, E H Collins MBE, P Cartwright and R Pushman.

15 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Honorary Aldermen D A E Cox, Mrs K M Peatey MBE, Mrs P Priestley and M B Oram. Councillors: M Appleyard, D Barnes, A D Collingwood, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, M Clarke, G Hall, M Knight, Mrs W Mallen, N B Marshall, Ms C J Oliver, C Whitehead and R Wilson.

16 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 13 April, and Annual Council held on 26 May 2015 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest were received.

18 CHAIRMAN`S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman listed and reported on some of his activities since the last meeting of the Council:

- (a) Royal Air Force Annual Reception
- (b) Women`s Cycle tour in Marlow
- (c) Marlow Town Regatta

(d) Liberteas – Celebration of the Magna Carta

(e) Armed Forces Day Flag Raising

The Chairman reported that this had taken place in Aylesbury on 27 June 2015. A letter of thanks had been received by the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire for the significant and valuable contribution received.

(f) SKIDZ Awards Evening

The Chairman reported with sadness and regret that Skidz had now closed down and been placed into liquidation.

19 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(a) Question from Mr T Snaith to the Leader of the Council

“This cabinet recently considered new powers “£100 fines for sleeping rough in High Wycombe” We have now seen a U Turn and press statement by the Leader as a result of Public petitions , Comments from Community leaders, Liberal Democrats planned demonstration ahead of Full Council and a planned sleep out on the same evening. The Leader said “We want to prevent a need to rough sleep and to help those that find themselves on the street.” What more can WDC do to help the most vulnerable in society and avoid sending messages that WDC has no heart and no charity?”

Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

“Thank you for continuing to show an interest in the work of the Council. I am however really disappointed that the good intentions of the Council to make our District a better place to live, work and enjoy it has been misconstrued or misunderstood by some members of the Community.

Let me make it absolutely clear that this is not a U-Turn. My statement at Cabinet on Monday was to clarify what the original report set out to do. Whilst the example used in the Cabinet Report cited the power to fine rough sleepers, we have no intention of fining people for simply sleeping rough.

If those that choose to rough sleep partake in anti-social behaviour whilst doing so, we may use these powers to tackle the ASB element associated.

However, I am pleased you raised the issue of rough sleeping as this is often only raised in winter months and or around Christmas time, whereas rough sleeping is a year round issue. We work closely with partner agencies to assist rough sleepers and prevent the need for rough sleeping in the District. Our friends and partners at Wycombe Homeless Connection operate a winter night shelter, we fund an outreach team (including emergency beds) and fund Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme as well as meet fortnightly with all relevant agencies to discuss and arrange plans to assist those that are sleeping rough.

If you have concerns about anyone rough sleeping in the District (or indeed elsewhere in the UK) please refer them (you only need a brief description and location) to Street Link who will direct local support services to assist. Street Link can be contacted on 0300 500 0914.”

Supplementary Question

“Liberal Democrats stand up for the most vulnerable in society and exist to build a fairer society in which no one shall be enslaved by poverty.

What does this Cabinet plan to do to adopt these values of fighting poverty, homelessness and rough sleeping rather than abdicating the role to Housing Associations and charities?”

Supplementary Response

“Homelessness is a priority which is why I reintroduced it as a full Cabinet portfolio position. I would encourage you as a community leader and activist to spread the truth about Wycombe’s intentions in this regard now that you have a definitive answer.

(b) Question from Mr A Slater to the Cabinet Member for Youth

“Please advise me what plans you now have in place, to proactively engage and help the youth of the district that are still in education, as there is a shortage of youth clubs and venues to spend time. With youths being forced to hang about on the streets across our district?”

Response from Councillor R Newman (Cabinet Member for Youth)

“Thank you for the question, and congratulations on your recent appointment of Chairman to Hazlemere Parish Council.

The leadership of WDC has decided that youth engagement will be a priority for the new administration. I have been exploring opportunities by engaging with officers and the impressive array of organisations which provide excellent youth service provision across the District. Further details on how we will engage and support young people and these youth service providers in the future will be announced in due course.

I agree that the unfortunate but necessary rationalisation of youth services by BCC has impacted a number of youth clubs locally. As you will understand WDC cannot make up the funding for this discretionary service but we can be supportive of moves by proactive residents’ groups to take over or set up new youth clubs. We run small grants programmes that can help get a club off the ground buy essential equipment or run a specific project and I would encourage interested groups to bid for funding. Local residents groups and / or voluntary organisations are much better placed to provide services locally than local authorities therefore supporting these services in other ways is a better approach than providing for them directly as a

Council.

It is also the case that youth clubs are only one of a number of activities that appeal to young people. For example, the District benefits from a vibrant amateur dramatics scene, the St John's Centre for Creativity, and many other local voluntary and community activities that many young people already engage in.

Not all young people want to be indoors and many enjoy volunteering with Chiltern Rangers, participating in our outstanding local sports clubs and socialising in our award winning parks. We should not demonise young people who choose to lawfully "hang about" on the streets as you suggest. I have been extremely impressed and heartened by the wealth and level of opportunities."

Supplementary Question

There was no supplementary question.

(c) Question from Dr L Derrick to the Cabinet Member for Planning

"On current plans, anything from 900 – 2000 homes will be built on the 5 reserve sites released by WDC last year. This is in addition to thousands of extra homes already built or being built at Kingshill Grange, Daws Hill, Bellfield, and the Hughenden Quarter - to name but a few. Despite this, Bcc has said it will not be building any new schools. It will be relying on the expansion of existing schools to meet the demand, and even then only if they are willing.

What is WDC doing to persuade BCC to provide school places locally, particularly primary places?"

Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)

"Thank You Doctor Derrick for the question. Wycombe District Council is working very closely with Bucks County Council in relation to infrastructure delivery for new housing in the district including the reserve sites. In terms of the school places, Bucks County Council, as the Local Education Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in its area and is the Education Authority for the application site. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 describes this responsibility as follows:

To ensure that schools in its area are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide education suitable for the different ages, abilities and aptitudes and special educational needs of pupils of school age.

WDC is working closely with Bucks County Council to understand the likely development impacts on education to ensure that these are taken into account in planning for new developments. In relation to the reserve sites, the Bucks County Council Education team gave a comprehensive presentation to the Reserve Sites Infrastructure Roundtable on 21 May 2015. The minutes are on the reserve sites section of the Council website. At this meeting they set out the current schemes on the ground to meet the need from housing growth including for

example extensions to Castlefield and Oakridge primary schools. They also set out a range of options to meet the school place demands of the reserve sites.

However, can I just emphasise that these are simply options at this stage. I am aware that some of the Reserve Site Liaison Groups are minded to propose that new primary schools be built on their sites but these possibilities have yet to be explored in detail and it is far too soon to indicate what the final choices might be.

Can I also emphasise that, working together, the Councils have a good track record of securing funding from developers towards education provision and this will continue to be the case. For example a new primary school will be delivered on the development of the former RAF Daws Hill site which will be expanded if the proposed development at Abbey Barn South goes ahead.

An Infrastructure Delivery Strategy for the reserve sites will be published in the coming months that will set out in more detail how and when the required infrastructure will be delivered. This will of course be subject to public consultation at the appropriate time.

I trust that this reassures you that we are doing everything possible to make sure that the future educational needs of the children in our district will be properly and fully met."

Supplementary Question

"When the new development is built on the reserve site at Terriers, there will be close to 1000 new homes on or around this site. Already children in the area are unable to go to their local primary school.

To accommodate the children from the Terriers reserve site, the BCC Cabinet Member for education says. "We are carrying out feasibility studies at a number of primary schools including Cedar Park, Hazlemere CE and Millbrook. Any expansion options will be consulted upon with regard to funding the provision through contributions."

One of the schools mentioned is Millbrook which is in Sands.

So 5 year old children living right on the north east of Wycombe will be expected to go to school in the west of Wycombe, 2 bus rides away. This is part of a deliberate policy by BCC.

Do you agree with BCC or are you going to fight for local school places for our children?"

Supplementary Response

"We are working closely with BCC to achieve the best possible result. During this process we will look at all aspects, including that of school travel."

(d) Question from Mr R Kin to the Leader of the Council

“WDC leased off part of the (Lintafoam) Public car park to the Kingsmead Business Park (KMBP) who created an access from the Kingsmead to the business park.

The remaining part of the car park is still a public car park but is being abused by KMBP workers who are parking cars all day preventing use by local residents, parents dropping off at school and other park users.

What is WDC’s answer to this problem that this council created by allowing access from KMBP and leasing off of a public car park?”

Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).

“We are fully aware of the issues, and we are working closely with the community to find solutions.

Under the terms of the lease, after an experimental period (which now shows that self- regulation by the Business park users has not worked), the tenant is obliged to install Ticket Machines in the half not leased and to patrol it, to deter long stay commuter parking. This is in progress. It is not the lease that has caused the problem but the successful letting up of all vacant offices on the Business Park, bringing/retaining jobs in the town and the direct link that has been formed between the Business Park and the Recreation Ground, which makes the Mead Car Park readily accessible to its occupiers”.

Supplementary Question

“A suggestion with regards to resolving these parking problems would be to extend the Lintafoam existing car park onto Kingsmead by using a product called `grass create`. This part of the public car park could have a time limit placed on it”

Supplementary Response

“The installation of pay and display machines is being looked at with the possibility of 2-3 hours of free parking in the public area. The effectiveness of this solution needs to be assessed prior to considering any extensions into the Mead”.

20 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

(a) Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council.

“In view of the leader's clarification at the cabinet meeting on 20th July, would she agree that this was a short sighted and poorly judged attempt to deal with the real problem of homeless people and secondly could she give an estimate of the number of such people for whom the 'Fixed Penalty Notices were devised?”

Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

“Thank you for your question. I would not agree with your statement regarding the Cabinet meeting on 15th June. That particular report was about giving delegated

authority to enable fixed penalty notices to be issued as the first step towards introducing a Public Spaces protection Order (PSPO). What the decision we made in June was definitely not, was a decision to fine rough sleepers.

Whilst the example used in the Cabinet Report cited the power to fine rough sleepers, we have no intention of fining people for simply sleeping rough.

If those that choose to rough sleep partake in anti-social behaviour whilst doing so, we may use these powers to tackle the ASB element associated. We are still looking at powers to tackle anti-social behaviour in our town centres (BUT haven't yet agreed to them) and these powers would apply to anyone, not just to those rough sleepers who may be behaving in an anti-social way.

The Fixed Penalty Notice report was about having a mechanism to use in designated areas. Not about dealing with homeless people. I have already explained tonight how we work closely with partner agencies to assist rough sleepers and I would again urge anyone with concerns about rough sleepers to contact Streetlink as mentioned earlier.

As Fixed Penalty Notices are new, there are currently no designated areas so there are no figures available."

Supplementary Question

"The meeting on the 15 June gave the impression that it was a done deal. I am grateful that common sense has prevailed and I hope that the U turn is welcomed by all.

Will the Leader categorically confirm that such punitive tactics will not be considered in the future to solve the problems of homelessness."

Supplementary Response

"It was not a U turn, but a misunderstanding, a misrepresentation. We will not fine simply for sleeping rough.

As you are aware I made supporting homelessness a priority. The report to Cabinet was not an issue about homelessness, but we will continue to strive to make our town centres safe from ASB wherever it may come from.

(b) Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration

"At the AGM the chairman of the council stated that 67% of Wycombe district is rural and therefore the local rural forum is very important. Would the member agree with me that industry is also very important to Wycombe district and would it be a good idea to have an industrial forum on the same lines as the rural forum, inviting somebody from local industry and commerce to give a presentation?"

Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council) in the absence of Councillor R Wilson (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)

“Thank you for your question Councillor Pearce and for raising this important issue. The Council has a long track record of successfully engaging with local businesses. In recent times we have developed our business breakfast programme of events, which has proved very successful. These events have always involved a local business sharing why they are located within the District and why it is such a good place to grow and flourish. One of the reasons why these events have been so successful is that they are held in different locations around the District, which has included Princes Risborough, Marlow, Bourne End and High Wycombe. Most recently we have also been engaging with the Desborough Road traders and local businesses to keep them informed and involved regarding the new Westbourne Street link road.

We have also been engaging with individual firms and recently visited the shortlisted companies for the “Best in Wycombe District” award, which we sponsored as part of the annual Bucks Business First Awards scheme. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Milestone Creative on winning this year’s award. Milestone Creative has been based here in High Wycombe for 19 years, with last year seeing their best performance ever. I would also mention the winner of the Bill Bendyshe-Brown award, which went to Excel Office Supplies for the best small business within our District.

We have also been engaging through the two Business Improvement Districts, which we acted as the catalyst to create, both for High Wycombe town centre and for Globe Park, Marlow, these being the only Business Improvement Districts in the County.

I am not therefore convinced that an industrial forum is the way forward, as experience has shown us that an issue or area based approach using different mechanisms is the best way to engage most effectively with local businesses, rather than a single dedicated forum.

Supplementary Question

“I felt that it would be a good idea to invite someone from industry and commerce to attend to conduct a presentation to Members. I think that it would be beneficial for the Council to hear of the problems with which they are confronted.”

Supplementary Response

“We continue to provide updated information to Members on economic development work being undertaken. Please send any ideas you may have on this matter to the relevant Cabinet Member who will look into your request”.

(c) Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Housing

“What does WDC estimate will be the effect of Government policy on homelessness in Wycombe, in particular the effect of the budget and of the transfer by the Government of the responsibility of meeting the right of disabled people under the Human Rights Act to independent living to Bucks County Council without the necessary funding to meet their needs?”

Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)

“This is not an easy question to answer as in short, we do not yet know what the impacts of the welfare cuts will be and would not wish to speculate at this stage. We do not know if this will cause and increase in homelessness and will continue to prevent and relieve homelessness as we have been doing. Our homelessness strategy is continually monitored and reviewed with our partner agencies, with a key action area being welfare reform. Groups meet regularly to discuss and prepare for the changes across Wycombe and indeed Bucks.

I understand that there are 81 service users across the whole of Buckinghamshire affected by the transfer of the independent living fund. We are not currently aware of any of these service users needing housing or homelessness assistance, however should any Wycombe service user require help they can of course contact the housing service directly. Other district service users will need to contact their own district’s housing service unless they have a connection to Wycombe.”

Supplementary Question

“On 1 July, the Government close the Independent Living Fund which supported some severely disabled people within the community. This responsibility was transferred to Local Councils but without the necessary funds. As the budget for this vulnerable group was cut by 15% and by 5% each year, BCC has stated that it will protect the independence of this group of people. Consequently the funding to other vulnerable people is likely to be cut, leaving even more people struggling with rent.

What estimate has WDC made about the numbers of people who will be left homeless by this cut to the Independent Living Fund.”

Supplementary Response

“We do not yet know what the cuts will be. I advise that any service user should contact their local housing service directly. In addition dual hatted councillors will take relevant information back to the county.

When we have all the necessary facts I will be happy to meet with you to discuss the matter further.”

(d) Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Cabinet Member for Housing

“Firstly, may I congratulate the new Leader and the Cabinet Member and I look forward to working with you during my term as one of the Councillors for Micklefield.

As a new Councillor, given the recent discussion and public interest and debate on the areas of homelessness and housing, would it be possible for the Cabinet to provide a Briefing Paper with information and up to date figures for homelessness in High Wycombe? with if possible, approximate breakdowns for people using Saunderton Lodge, families, rough sleepers and people who have experienced domestic violence.

It would also be helpful to have some aspects with regard to housing waiting lists and projection for future demand. I would be grateful and I am sure it would be useful to other Councillors as well?"

Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)

"It is difficult to give you full details of all the information you have requested. However the latest up to date information can be obtained through Brian Daly who will be happy to help and can be contacted directly."

Supplementary Question

"I do not have one, but can I please request that the relevant information and contact details be circulated to all Members."

Supplementary Response

"Yes of course, and can I also draw to your attention to the Housing PAG which will commence in September, which you may attend in order to understand and inform policy on housing and homelessness in the district."

(e) Question from Councillor R Farmer to the Cabinet Member for Community

"Isn't it time that WDC provided a large TV screen in a public area within the town centre like most other cities and large towns, considering the large success of the temporary screen recently in Frogmoor organised by Wycombe Bid?"

Response from Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

"The recent Big Screen events at the start of July on Frogmoor run by the HWBIDCo were indeed a success. This year the screen was used for live streaming of 'Super Saturday' from Wimbledon and then for the screening three cult films on the Sunday. Attendance for the weekend was around 500 people.

Having a permanent big screen is, as Cllr Farmer states is a popular feature in cities and in some larger town centres. This could be a provision that the Council looks to consider as part of its on-going High Wycombe Town Centre regeneration plans.

That said, there are of course a number of factors that would need to be considered in detail, above simply the location of a screen to ensure that the provision was feasible, whether a permanent fixture is actually the right model for Wycombe;

something our residents want and would support and use so that it didn't become an expensive white elephant, and more importantly offer value for money."

Supplementary Question

"Considering that businesses will soon take a vote on the continuation of the Wycombe Bid, will WDC take over its role, on such things as the hanging baskets, frog fest and the enterprise shop."

Supplementary Response

"I doubt if that would happen due to the costs, but we would need to look into this further at the relevant time."

(f) Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration

"Can you inform us of the future of the following town centre buildings? These buildings are not in use at present and there is a great deal of interest in how the Council is intending to utilise them. 1) The Reggie Goves Centre. 2) The Old Library, Queen Victoria Road. 3) The Public Toilets, Pauls Row?"

Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council) in the absence of Councillor R Wilson (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)

"Reggie Goves the ground floor is under offer to a themed restaurant, subject to planning, aimed at strengthening the restaurant offer in Pauls Row and generating a substantial rental income. The first floor will remain available for community use but has yet to be marketed.

Old Library – this remains a BCC-owned property and theirs to resolve. We have put HQ Theatres in touch with BCC, for HQT are in discussion with Bucks New University over plans for a new, small 'black box' theatre.

Toilets - after recommendations from the High Wycombe Town Committee, Cabinet at their March 2015 meeting agreed the release of £30,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding to enable the toilets at Pauls Row to re-open after they were closed in 2013.

Meetings have taken place with the Police who have raised no objections to the toilets re-opening though with reduced hours. The intention is that coin operated paddle gates will be installed to discourage anti-social behaviour and so that a small income is received for on-going maintenance of the toilets. Quotes have been received for the new gates and the works will be undertaken over the coming months subject to the details being finalised."

Supplementary Question

"I am sorry that the Reggie Goves Centre has gone out of use commercially. Perhaps the upstairs can be used for community use. With regards to the toilets,

these need to be renovated as a matter of urgency so that they can be brought back into use.”

Supplementary Response

“Yes we will pursue that matter of the toilets as soon as possible.”

(g) Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Deputy Leader of the Council (Cabinet Member for Engagement & Strategy)

“Does the Leader agree with me, that in view of the fact that it has been indicated that the Council will operate with openness and transparency, it would be a good idea to return to the practice of having photographs on a proper printed laminated board positioned in a prominent position in the reception area? This may sound trivial but it took me 8 years of hard work to get here in this chamber in the first place and more recently a heck of a lot of foot pounding and again hard work to return.”

Response from Councillor A Hussain (Deputy Cabinet Member for Engagement & Strategy) in the absence of Councillor D Barnes (Deputy Leader of the Council (Cabinet Member for Engagement & Strategy))

“Thank you for your question Cllr Pearce, although I am surprised that you felt that this was one that needed to be raised at a full council meeting. I would have welcomed the opportunity to discuss this with you in person – indeed I believe you have already been in touch with Cllr Barnes about it.

As you know, pictures and contact details for all 60 councillors are available on our website – www.wycombe.gov.uk. We also have a feature online which allows residents to type in their home postcode and find out who their specific local ward councillors are if they aren't sure.

The July edition of *Wycombe District Times*, which is the magazine the council produces for local residents about the work of the council, also featured photos and listings of ward councillors.*

That being said, we are looking into whether there is a cost-effective way of displaying all 60 councillors' pictures in a public area of the offices and will keep you personally updated on any progress with that.”

Supplementary Question

“I spoke to Democratic Services 4 years ago regarding the unprofessional photos in the area, and now thought it would be useful to discuss it in this forum. We should definitely return to the old laminated format”

Supplementary Response

“We will be looking into it and will keep you informed when we have all the relevant information.”

(h) Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Youth

“Congratulations on your appointment to Cabinet Member for Youth. What is the Wycombe District Council strategy for youth?”

Response from Councillor R Newman (Cabinet Member for Youth)

“Thank you for your question and kind words on my appointment. I am delighted to have been appointed Cabinet Member for Youth and I am fully committed to ensuring that WDC engages with younger people across the district, including our substantial student population, which is one of the Leader’s top priorities for the administration. I have developed the following draft strategy which requires discussion with my Cabinet colleagues, policy advisory group and relevant officers.”

My 3 high level objectives for the portfolio are:

1. To support young people to fulfil their potential and find employment: It is important that we strive to provide equality of opportunity for all young people within the district. WDC should support the various service providers operating in the district that work to improve the skills of young people, run apprenticeships and provide further education.
2. To engage and include young people within the wider community: I believe in the individual and firmly believe everyone should be treated as such; however there are specific and identifiable challenges and issues that are faced by younger people. I am seeking to propose that when officers and cabinet members are preparing reports and engaging in decision making that there is duty to “have regard to” youth engagement. A coordinated approach to youth engagement will be necessary.
3. To seek to provide facilities and spaces for all young people: WDC has many capital assets at its disposal and a well-developed capital programme. In addition to existing assets, there will be additional community assets that developers will need to provide, including potentially facilities for younger people, at the reserve sites and other significant developments under s106 agreements.

There is much to do to implement my objectives and I look forward to working with our partners to make the District a great place for our young people”

Supplementary Question

“I agree with the Chairman under his announcements, that the closure of Skidz is bad news. The project was supported by all parties for a long time. Would it meet your objectives to try and introduce some sort of rescue package for Skidz.

In addition linked to your 3rd priority, will housing for young people be a matter for consideration.”

Supplementary Response

“Yes indeed I do agree with you with regards to the closure of Skidz, who I met at the Youth Forum and was scheduled to see in September. I will certainly consult to see if we can do anything to help.

I am also expecting to be appointed as the Council representative on the Board of Padstones. As such I will engage and consult on youth homelessness issues, whilst also ensuring that other officers pay regard to this matter.”

21 PETITIONS

No petitions were received by the deadline of 5pm on Monday 20 July 2015.

22 CABINET – 15 JUNE 2015

Minute 4 – Chilterns AONB Management Plan

A Member rose to ask a question relating to the above. He stated that the subject seemed to have prompted numerous e-mails from members of the public and perhaps it would be useful if the Leader or Cabinet Member for Planning could reiterate the reasons behind the recommendation Council was being asked to agree.

The relevant Cabinet Member rose to clarify the situation. He stated that it had indeed generated a lot of correspondence but unfortunately much of it was based upon a number of misconceptions. Before coming on to those misconceptions he stated, he wanted to make it quite clear that this Council was fully supportive of the AONB and its purpose and of the Chilterns Conservation Board and the work that it did. That was why the Council appointed a member to be on the conservation board. He congratulated the member for offering to take up that appointment this evening.

He stated that Chilterns ANOB was fundamental to the character of Wycombe District, and that the Council had already adopted planning documents and robust policies to ensure its special character was protected, and had a track record on achieving this. He reminded Members that it was not too long ago that the Council had refused 2 planning applications for solar farms that sat outside the AONB but which were deemed had an unacceptable impact on the views from the AONB.

But, he continued, it was also worth saying, in relation to this specific recommendation, that, there was no statutory duty on this Council to endorse the Chilterns Conservation Board Management Plan. That was a document that the Chilterns Conservation Board had a statutory duty to produce.

Indeed, in that regard, it was important to understand that – as a management plan – much of the content of that document, being about land management rather than land use, had no bearing on planning and so those parts were not a material consideration to take into account in planning decisions. For those parts that were relevant to planning, they were a material consideration and their status was not

altered in any way whether it be endorsed or acknowledged or whether the Council remain silent.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that this was a significant point. The Council had not endorsed or even acknowledged previous versions of the CCB Management Plan, nothing about them had been said. He did not think that was right. The AONB was so important to the district, that he thought that should be shown by acknowledging the plan. That the Cabinet had recognised it this time round and that it has generated such an outcry is slightly ironic !

Finally, he pointed out that the Chilterns AONB covered 13 separate Councils only 2 of which so far had decided to endorse the plan. He did not feel therefore that the Council was out of step.

In conclusion, he reiterated the importance that the Council attached to the protection and enhancement of the AONB and the active support that had been given to the CCB. He gave his reassurance that the Council would continue to fulfill the obligations in relation to the AONB from a planning perspective.

With all that in mind and for the reasons he had given, he asked the Council to support the Cabinet's recommendation to acknowledge the latest CCB Management Plan.

Minute 5- ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 Fixed Penalty Notices

A Member stated that one of the London Borough Councils had used the powers available to them under this Act to prevent nuisance caused by loud cars on the roads. He suggested that this Council should also look into this issue to deal with such nuisances causing anti- social behaviour.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on and 15 June 2015, be received and the recommendations as set out at minute number 4 be approved and adopted.

23 CABINET- 20 JULY 2015

Item 12 - Minutes

A Member enquired as to whether the Cabinet felt that they could take responsibility for the misconceptions around rough sleepers.

The Leader responded that the report was clear that the issue was more concerned with anti- social behaviour as opposed to rough sleepers. She emphasised that she was keen for the Town to be a safe place to live and work.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20 July be received and the

recommendations as set out at minute numbers 15 and 22 be approved and adopted.

24 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 9 June 2015, be received.

25 IMPROVEMENT & REVIEW COMMISSION

Item 5 – Saunderton Lodge

A Member enquired as to whether previous reports into the review of Saunderton Lodge would be considered and used to inform the options appraisal.

The Chairman of the Committee expressed that Saunderton hospital was dear to his heart, and he hoped that Members would take the opportunity to contribute to the Task and Finish Group set up to look into it.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement & Review Commission held on 22 June be received.

26 AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 25 June 2015 be received.

27 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the High Wycombe Town Committee held on 23 June 2015, be received.

28 JNC STAFFING MATTERS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the JNC Staffing Matters Committee, held on 26 February, 10 June and 17 June be received.

29 LICENSING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 7 July 2015, be received.

30 PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee held on 6 July 2015

be received and the recommendation as set out at minute number 43 be approved and adopted.

31 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 8 April 29 April and 3 June be received.

32 REGULATORY & APPEALS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory & Appeals Committee held on 8 July 2015, be received and the recommendation as set out at minute number 5 be approved and adopted.

33 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Ms J Wassell and seconded by Councillor Ms A Baughan:

"This Council supports the view that the release of the Reserve Sites presents a golden opportunity to substantially meet the current and future social housing needs of our district. In addition to the focus on infrastructure it is essential that another strand of work is added to identify the scale of the need for social housing and ensure that any new development is maximised to ensure the need is met. Wycombe District Council should take the lead in organising a multi-agency housing summit to be held in the autumn of 2015 to identify and discuss the needs, challenges and opportunities for housing provision in the Wycombe District."

In proposing the motion, Cllr Ms J Wassell stated that prior to the May elections the Cabinet had made the controversial decision to release the reserve sites, a decision which enabled the Council to negotiate with developers rather than uncontrolled applications. The Leader had signalled her commitment to housing matters by the appointment of a designated Cabinet Member for Housing. This was welcomed in all quarters.

A number of groups had been set up to look at the impact of developments of these sites and Wycombe's infrastructure as a whole. As a member of the infrastructure sub group she stated that she had been impressed by the quality of presentations and the level of debate. We were moving towards a more balanced position in which residents' needs, infrastructure needs and future housing needs could be considered in more detail.

Most Councillors, she continued, would be aware of the demand for decent housing through our own case work, the demands on Council services and voluntary agencies to which we belong and represent. As well as our current housing waiting list there were policies and changes impacting on the need for housing. These included: The housing benefit cap, mortgage repossession, the aspiration of young people locally to buy or rent their own home. Many young people couldn't get their

foot on the housing ladder in areas such as ours. There was a shortage of housing to meet the needs of disabled people for ground floor properties either purpose built or that could be adapted. Private renting was on the rise. There existed the proposed right to buy of social housing which could impact adversely on rural and town areas alike, this was being challenged by the House of Lords.

She stated that she felt it would benefit all Councillors if the Council through the auspices of the lead Cabinet Member could hold an event to hear about the work of our Council Department, local charities and other stakeholders and providers. This would assist in having a strategic grasp of the extent of the problems and how we could usefully look at the opportunities that the reserve sites presented in order to assess the type of housing that can be provided when reserve sites were developed.

I am hopeful that this will move the debate forward for all of us who care passionately about homelessness and housing issues in Wycombe District which is not confined to one political party or another.

Following a multi-agency summit, she stated that she was hopeful a committee could be established to ensure that an appropriate level and type of social housing was planned and negotiated with developers. This could progress the work of a previous Task and Finish group to ensure that some of our most vulnerable residents with pressing needs and young people were being considered. A great deal of time and energy is rightly being given to local residents' concerns about the development and infrastructure. She hoped that Councillors would support the motion today, demonstrating that everyone was committed to meeting social housing need and planning for this.

The seconder of the motion, Councillor Ms A Baughan reserved her right to speak until later in the debate.

The Leader of the Council rose to speak, stating that she had indeed made housing a priority for people in the district. She felt that affordable housing was of concern for young people, and she wished to look at the issue in collaboration with her Cabinet. As such she felt that this motion should be referred to Cabinet under **Standing Order 12.6**.

This was duly seconded by Councillor Mrs J Langley.

Therefore, in accordance with Standing order 12.6, no further discussion or debate took place at the meeting and the motion was referred to Cabinet. A report back to Full Council at its next meeting on 5 October would be forthcoming by way of recommendation from Cabinet as to whether or not to adopt the motion or give any such other advice as was appropriate.

34 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2

There were none.

35 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: That

(i) the following appointments to Outside Organisations be confirmed until July 2019,

(ii) the late addition of the Marlow Society be noted.

OUTSIDE BODIES

Organisation	Representative(s)
Brinkhurst Trust (1)	Cllr Miss S Brown
Bucks Advantage (1)	Chief Executive
Bucks Historic Building Trust (1)	Cllr H McCarthy
Bucks Historic Environment Forum (1)	Cllr H McCarthy
Bucks Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (2)	Cllr Ms K Wood Cllr D Barnes
Chilterns Conservation Board (1)	Cllr H McCarthy
Flexible Home Improvement Loans Ltd (1)	Head of Environmental Services
High Heavens Waste Disposal Complex Liaison Committee (3)	Cllr Mrs J Teesdale Cllr Mrs W Mallen (S.D) Cllr M Harris (S.D)
High Wycombe Business Improvement District (1)	Cllr A R Green
High Wycombe District Scout Executive (1)	Cllr Mrs W Mallen
John Lane Charity (2)	Cllr Mrs J Adey Cllr Z Ahmed
Marlow & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce (2)	Cllr A Collingwood Cllr Miss S Brown (S.D)
Marlow Community Forum (1)	Cllr R Wilson
Marlow Museum (1)	Cllr R Wilson
Marlow Regatta Ltd (2)	Cllr A D Collingwood Cllr R Wilson
Marlow Society (1)	Cllr A D Collingwood
Natural Environment Partnership Board (1)	Cllr H L McCarthy
Padstones Board of Trustees (1)	Cllr R Newman
Shopmobility Management Committee (1)	Cllr Mrs J Teesdale
South East Reserves Forces & Cadets	Cllr I McEnnis

Organisation	Representative(s)
Association (1)	
The Chiltern Society (1)	Cllr D Knights
Wycombe Air Park Joint Consultative Committee (5)	
Sands	Cllr Z Ahmed
Hambledon Valley	Cllr C Whitehead
Greater Marlow	
Chiltern Rise	Cllr M Harris
Booker & Cressex	Cllr I McEnnis
	Cllr M Davy
Wycombe Almshouse Trust (4)	Cllr R Gaffney
	Cllr A Hill
	Cllr B Pearce
	Cllr P Turner
Wycombe Area Youth Council (1)	Cllr R Newman
Wycombe Heritage and Arts Trust (1)	Cllr A R Green
Wycombe Housing Forum (1) and (1) sub	Cllr Mrs J Langley
	Cllr D Carroll (S.D)
Wycombe Women's Aid (women only as observers) (1) + (1) sub.	Cllr Mrs S Adoh
	Cllr Mrs W Mallen (S.D)

36 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

The individual decisions published since the last meeting of the Council were noted.

37 IAN WESTGATE - RETIREMENT

The Chairman announced this would be Ian Westgate's last Full Council before his retirement in late September, and he paid tribute to Ian's length of service and work for the Council.

There was a round of applause.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Karen Satterford - Chief Executive
- Ian Westgate - Corporate Director
- Iram Malik - Democratic Services Officer