

Supplement to Full Council

Date: 14 December 2015
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe on 14 December 2015 at 6.30 pm to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.



Ms K Satterford
Chief Executive

Fire Alarm - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

Agenda

Item		Page
5	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	1 - 2
	Written questions may be asked of the Leader or any Cabinet member, if submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 10 December 2015. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they are received.	
	A questioner will have a maximum of 1 minute to ask a question, and the answer shall not exceed 3 minutes. Any questioner may put one supplementary question without notice within a maximum time of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.	
6	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS	3 - 6
	Questions to the Leader or any Cabinet Members must be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 10 December 2015. Questions will be taken first from Leaders of the political parties in order of number of Members.	

Other Members will be called upon in the order in which questions have been received. Every Member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it does not introduce any new matter. The appropriate Member will respond to any questions remaining unanswered at the expiry of 30 minutes in writing.

Any questions remaining unanswered after 30 minutes will be answered within 10 working days in writing after the meeting by the appropriate Member and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| 14 | PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE | 7 - 12 |
| | To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meeting: | |
| | Personnel & Development Committee 30 November 2015 | |
| 15 | REGULATORY & APPEALS COMMITTEE | 13 - 16 |
| | To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meetings: | |
| | (Special) Regulatory & Appeals Committee 7 December 2015 | |
| 19 | QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2 | 17 - 18 |
| | To receive details of any written questions submitted before the deadline fo 12 noon on Thursday 10 December 2015. | |

**For further information, please contact Iram Malik on 01494 421204,
iram_malik@wycombe.gov.uk**

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 14 December 2015

AGENDA ITEM 5

Questions from Members of the Public

1. Question from Dr S Rybak to the Leader of the Council

The Cabinet briefing paper on refugees states that discussions are ongoing between Wycombe District Council and the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration, Buckinghamshire County Council and other agencies. The paper also stresses repeatedly the need for consultation and collaboration with the Home Office, the NHS, the Department for Work and Pensions, Thames Valley Police and voluntary and statutory agencies covering education, social care, benefits, counselling and translation.

Please would you tell us what substantive work on preparing a refugee resettlement strategy WDC has carried out with each of these bodies and what progress has been made in the ten weeks since the last Council meeting?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).

This page is intentionally left blank

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 14 December 2015

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

1. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council

How is that in a prosperous town like High Wycombe we have above average levels of child poverty in Micklefield, Bowerdean, Disraeli and Castlefield, where from a quarter to a third of the children live in poverty.

Would the leader agree that this is a serious concern for WDC and if so what action is being proposed to alleviate officially defined child poverty in High Wycombe?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

2. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Cabinet Member for Housing

Could you give an update on the latest figures on assessed housing need in the district and outline the council's strategy for ensuring that this need is met?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)

3. Question from Councillor M Clarke to the Cabinet Member for Planning

How many new dwellings have current permission to be built and have not been completed?

Could the answer identify the numbers by parish, including the un-parished areas?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)

4. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Planning

On Saturday 28th October I had an opportunity to join the Nightsafe team and walk in the town centre. In Pauls Row the new pedestrianized area appears to have improved the look of the area, nevertheless I came away with a few public safety concerns. The pedestrianized area is accessed both by pedestrians and motor vehicles. During our walk unsafe pedestrian and driver behaviour was observed. Some members of the public felt that some control of vehicular traffic is required either through better signage or by installing some bollards.

Can you please reassure the members that appropriate measures to improve Health and Safety in the Town Centre are being considered before an accident takes place? What improvements can we expect?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)

5. Question from Councillor S K Raja to the Cabinet Member for Youth

Following the demise of Skidz earlier this year, could the Cabinet Member for Youth provide an update to members on the provision of motor vehicle courses in our District for the existing and prospective students, in particular those with special requirements?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor R Newman (Cabinet Member for Youth)

6. Question from Councillor M Asif to the Cabinet Member for Community

At a recent Cabinet meeting it was resolved that the new cemetery at Queensway was to have £20,000 allocated from the Special Expenses reserves, to fund the necessary feasibility work.

Would the cabinet member say what the feasibility study involves and why does it cost so much?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

7. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Planning

I am often asked by members of the public why there is a housing shortage when so many buildings are so obviously unused. Could you let me know if there is a strategy for the use of empty buildings and whether all possible sites have been identified for current and future housing needs?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)

8. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Cabinet Member for Community

Would the Cabinet member for Communities agree that increasing levels of obesity are a serious threat to the overall health of the District and puts extra strain on the already tight budget of the NHS.

Therefore, now that the new Leisure Centre is about to come on stream, what actions does she recommend to encourage middle aged people to become physically active?

And would she agree that serious discounts and special recruitment drives may be appropriate in getting the District on the road to long term fitness?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

9. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Recently there has been a thread on social media about the state of the stairwells and lift in the Wycombe Swan car park. I have noticed myself that these are often unpleasant and smelly. Could you give any reason why this important car park has such difficulties with cleansing issues?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Teesdale (Cabinet Member for Environment)

This page is intentionally left blank

Personnel and Development Committee Minutes

Date: 30 November 2015

Time: 7.00 - 8.15 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M Harris (in the Chair)

Councillors: G C Hall, Mrs W J Mallen, G Peart and S K Raja,

46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L Wood.

47 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee held on 6 July be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

49 WORKFORCE REPORT 2014/15

A report was submitted which sought comment and feedback on the Workforce Report 2014-15. The report produced and published annually, provided Members and senior managers with information relating to the Council's workforce to assist in identifying the key equality issues for the organisation, thereby informing the development and maintenance of human resource policies and practices to support the achievement of strategic priorities. A copy of the report was attached at Appendix A of the report.

The main findings of the Workforce report and challenges to be met for the future were summarised in paragraph 4. Members were informed that the findings from this report would form part of a wider review to be undertaken in the spring of 2016 of the Workforce Strategy. A copy of the report would be submitted for consideration to a future meeting of this Committee.

Members were informed that the Joint Staff Committee had also considered this report in some depth at its meeting on 4 November and had fed back its views and comments. A number of matters were discussed, including:

Turnover was within the target range (top end). We were typically able to fill advertised vacancies. We did have some hard to fill jobs e.g. Planning Lawyers.

Absence rate continued to be lower than the national average. Stress depression and mental health was the top reason for absence which was consistent with national statistics, followed by viral infections and operations.

Workforce was balanced against the wider community. Black and Ethnic Minority staff were over represented in the lower grades and were less proportionate in the more senior grades, which mirrored the national picture of those Councils who completed the recent LGA survey.

Officers continued to have access to a wide range of quality training. We were good at training people in job skills, but needed improvement in career development training.

50% of officers were at the top of the grade. There had been a significant reduction in the number of officers/ posts over the last 10 years and as a result there were fewer development opportunities. We lost more people than we recruited

At the previous meeting of this Committee, Members had requested that individual Heads of Service attend the meetings to address the issue of key workforce challenges in their service areas. As a starting point the Chief Executive was in attendance in her capacity as Head of Paid Service responsible for the day to day management arrangements.

Members were informed that staff numbers had reduced from 650 in 2006 to approximately 300 today. There had also been a 66% reduction in the Senior Management Team. Despite this reduction, performance had continued to improve which demonstrated the efficiency and talent of the staff on board.

It was explained that the senior management structure had been reviewed to better support the three priority areas in the new Corporate Plan, with a refocus of the Corporate Director post on growth and regeneration and realignment of some of the Heads of Service reporting arrangements.

The Chief Executive further explained that since the implementation of austerity measures over the last 5 or so years, the direction taken by Senior Management Board had changed. All requests for new staff now required SMB approval in order to keep staffing numbers under review and in order to closely monitor staffing spend.

The Chief Executive stated that there were 3 significant areas of work that the Council was focussed on. Firstly, in the Planning Service which had necessitated the recruitment of additional staff but the Council had done well to secure external funding for these through, for instance, Policy Performance Agreements. Secondly, the Regeneration Programme. Staffing capacity was under review to ensure challenges could be met for the upcoming programme over the next 2 years, and exploring the opportunities and possibilities for carrying out more work in house. Thirdly, the Council had commissioned the Planning Advisory Service to carry out a review of our Planning service and compare it with other Local Authorities in the country.

The Chief Executive went on to state that the Council would be looking at future capacity building in light of its challenges; talent and succession planning, addressing skills shortages and developing more of a commercial approach. Members were informed that there was a planned workshop next week to start this piece of work and to develop the skills and behaviours of managers through the Learning and Management Development Programme.

A Member asked how many full-time and part-time Planners the Council employed and how many were from an ethnic minority group.

Another Member enquired as to whether it was intended to further reduce staff in the future. She was informed that it was very unlikely that staffing levels could be significantly cut as the Council would be unable to deliver the same high quality of service as it had been and was providing at the current time. It was highlighted that between 2015- 2019 the emphasis would be upon growth of the District this included projects such as the development at Handycross, the Desborough Road area and the Hughenden Quarter.

It was also requested information be provided about stress management levels by service area.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

50 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016/17

A report was submitted which sought comments and feedback on the revision to the Pay Policy Statement.

The report stated that it had been the Localism Act 2011 which had introduced a requirement for Local Authorities to publish an Annual Pay Policy Statement commencing in 2012/13.

The Pay Policy Statement was a summary of the Council's current policies practices and relevant contractual national and local terms. There was a statutory duty to include within it the remuneration of its Chief Officers, and that of its lowest paid employees.

The report also stated that the Statement contained the same detailed information as that within the previous year but with rates information having been updated where appropriate. The Pay Policy Statement was attached at Appendix A to the report.

Members of the Joint Staff Committee had also considered this report at the previous meeting, and had made no amendments, but had requested that in future comparative ratios from the previous years be included in the covering report.

A Member questioned the reason as to why it was thought that there was a difference between male and female average salaries as set within the policy. It was explained that a possible explanation could be that there were a greater

number of females working on a part time basis. However it was felt that further work to review the figures was required.

RECOMMENDED: That the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 be approved.

51 EMPLOYEES` CODE OF CONDUCT

A report was submitted which sought comments and feedback on the revisions to the Employees` Code of Conduct.

The report stated that the Code, which was last reviewed in 2012 took account of the Audit Commission`s recommendations to the Council to incorporate the Council`s values within the Code and to ensure that staff were made aware of the process for declaring interests together with the requirement to confirm compliance on an annual basis.

The main revisions to the code were highlighted at paragraph 9 of the report, and detailed within Appendix A to the report. Underscoring indicated amendments to be made and wording in Section 14 that had been blocked out indicated further amendment following discussion at the Joint Staff Committee.

The Presenting Officer informed Members that the code had been discussed in some detail by Members of the Joint Staff Committee. A main area of concern highlighted by Unison had been in relation to the use of social media (under section 14 of the code) in that conduct out of work could not be reasonably judged on the same footing as conduct at work. Further discussions with Unison and the Chairman had taken place following the Joint Staff Committee meeting at which Unison had made further proposed changes to the policy. An addendum was tabled setting out the sections in question with red highlights of the changes. This included, section 2 (Standards) to include reference to social media and section 14 ICT (Security) to clarify that staff should be mindful in both a personal and professional capacity when using ICT systems.

It was noted that one member of Unison would have preferred the word "personal" to be removed. Members agreed that for transparency both personal and professional capacity should be retained in the policy.

RECOMMENDED: That subject to the inclusion of the addendum for Sections 2 and 14 of the Code, the Employees` Code of Conduct be approved.

52 PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE/CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

A report was submitted which stated that the Council had commenced a review of its Constitution. As the first stage of this review all Committees were being asked to consider its Terms of Reference and propose any changes or amendments as appropriate. The proposed changes would then be referred to the Regulatory & Appeals Committee for further consideration in the spring of 2016, and then onto Full Council for its endorsement.

The report also stated that the Chairman of the Committee in conjunction with the Head of HR having preliminarily reviewed the Terms of Reference had not proposed any amendments to the current version, attached at Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the Head of Planning & Sustainability be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee
- (ii) no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference for the Personnel and Development Committee

53 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

In considering the date of the next meeting of the Committee, it was agreed that the previously scheduled date of 18 January 2016 would be cancelled. The next meeting would now take place on 21 March 2015.

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee be held on Monday 21 March 2016 at 7pm.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

John McMillan	- Head of HR, ICT & Customer Services
Karen Satterford	- Chief Executive
Iram Malik	- Democratic Services Officer
Jo Whiteley	- Human Resources Manager (Operations)

This page is intentionally left blank

Special Regulatory & Appeals Committee Minutes

Date: 7 December 2015

Time: 7.00 - 7.28 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J A Savage (in the Chair)

Councillors Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, C Etholen and M Hussain JP, R Farmer, A R Green, I L McEnnis and R Raja

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from M C Appleyard, A D Collingwood, R Gaffney, D Knights and B Pearce.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

15 QUESTIONS AT FULL COUNCIL AND PETITIONS SCHEME

A report was submitted which requested approval for the proposed amendments from the Leader of the Council to a number of Standing Orders within the Constitution. These related to an alteration in the deadlines for Public and Members` questions, a change to the order for taking Members` questions and an amendment to the rule concerning when a question could be rejected within a six month period. The report also sought to incorporate within the Standing Orders, additional clarification with regards to the Council`s Petition Scheme.

The amendments were set out in paragraphs 11, 14, 16, 18 and 20 of the report, which if endorsed by Full Council, would be incorporated within the Council`s Standing Orders within the Constitution.

The report stated that the current deadline for public and Member questions to be submitted to Full Council was 3 clear days before the meeting was due to take place. At the present time Standing Orders stated that questions were to be received no later than 12 noon on the Thursday prior to the Monday meeting. The proposal was now to extend the deadline for submission to 5 clear days before the meeting.

The report also proposed an amendment in relation to the order of Members` questions, which currently allowed for one initial leader`s questions from each of the political parties, and the rest to be taken in the order in which they were received. It was proposed that the questions continue to be taken first from the Group Leaders but that the first question from other Councillors be asked before any subsequent

questions from the same Councillor was taken. As such no Member would be allowed to ask consecutive questions.

A change was also sought with regards to the current provision of rejecting questions which were substantially the same as a question which had been put to a Council meeting during the past six months. It was now proposed that this be rejected if it was on the same topic as that which had been brought during the past six months.

The report proposed a further amendment in relation to the wording of the Petitions Scheme. Standing Order 9.6 (2) currently stated that the names, addresses and signatures of at least 10 people supporting the petition should be included within a petition. The proposal before Members was to consider whether it should become a requirement for those 10 people to reside, work or study within the District in order for them to be eligible for their names to be included within the petition.

Members considered the report before them in detail. Regarding the deadline for questions, some Members indicated that the current 3 day deadline was adequate, and saw no valid reason for altering the deadline to 5 days prior to the meeting for submission of questions. It was felt that Cabinet Members for their relevant area of responsibility should comfortably be able to answer the given question without the need for any additional time. Other Members disagreed with this viewpoint stating that the proposed extended deadline would assist in alleviating the pressure on both the officers and Members to ensure that a high quality comprehensive response was able to be constructed. As such the proposed extension was viewed as a beneficial amendment for all concerned.

Upon a vote being taken, the proposed amendment to Standing Orders 10 and 11 were agreed by the majority.

Discussion then followed on the order of questions to be taken by Members at Council, referred to in Standing Order 11.3 (b) of the Constitution. There was general agreement over the proposal to continue to allow questions from Group Leaders in the first instance but then to take questions from other Members, prior to accepting any second question from any Member.

Members sought further clarification on the definition of adopting another Member's question as set out in the wording, and requested that this should expressly state that it referred to a member of the same group as the relevant Group Leader

The discussion then turned to Standing Order 11.3 (e) which related to similar questions asked at Council within a 6 month period. Overall Members expressed reservations over the proposal, stating that the definition of the 'same topic' was too broad, and needed to be narrowed down. Although Members understood and appreciated the spirit of the proposal it was suggested that rejection of the question should be at the Chairman's discretion and which should also be reflected within the Standing Order providing clarity as to where the authority lay. As such it was agreed that the existing order should remain in place, but reworded to read: **The Chairman may reject a question** if it is substantially the same question that was put to a council meeting during the past six months. The final part of the discussion

was in relation to the Council's Petition Scheme. Members agreed with the proposal to include the requirement for signatories of a petition to live, work or study within the Wycombe District.

RECOMMENDED: That (i)

a) Standing Order 10 (Public Speaking) Section 2 be amended to read as follows:

"Questions must be submitted in writing to the Head of Democratic, Leal and Policy Services not later than 12 noon, 5 working days before the Full Council meeting."

b) Standing Order 11 (Member Questions) Section 2(a) be amended to read as follows:

"at any Council meeting, a Member may ask the Leader, or a Cabinet Member, or a Chairman of a Committee any question upon any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District, subject to notice being given in writing to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services no later than 12 noon, 5 working days before the Full Council meeting."

c) Standing Order 11.3 (b) (Order of Member Questions) be amended to read as follows:

"Questions shall be taken first from the Group Leaders of the political parties who shall be entitled to ask one initial Leader's question each, including the right to adopt another Member's question from his/her Group, subject to the Code of Conduct for Members and to that Member's consent of which written notice shall have been given to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services prior to the meeting. The order of questions shall then permit the first question from each other Councillor to be asked before any subsequent questions from the same Councillor. One question will be taken in turn from each Councillor and there shall be no consecutive questions from the same Councillor unless there are no other questions to be asked."

d) Standing Order 11.3 (e) (Similar Questions Asked within a 6 Month Period) be amended to read as follows:

"The Chairman may reject a question if it is substantially the same as a question that was put to a Council meeting during the past six months."

e) Standing Order 9.6 (Council Petitions Scheme) be amended to read as follows:

The names and address and signature of at least 10 people supporting the petition who live, work or study in the District.

(ii) The Democratic Services Manager be authorised to make the amendments set out above.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Iram Malik - Democratic Services Officer

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 14 December 2015

AGENDA ITEM 19

Questions from Members under Standing Order 11.2

1. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration

I would be grateful for a further update about the future use of the Old Library, Queen Victoria Road and the Reggie Goves Centre. I am aware that I asked about this a few months ago, however I am asking in the hope there is some further progress?

Written reply to be given by Councillor R Wilson (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration).

This page is intentionally left blank