

Minutes of Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 26 April 2022, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor T Austin (Chair)

Councillors:

J Alcock	S Hirst
S Atkinson	B Holden
D Berryman	S Hore
S Bibby	K Horkin
D Birtwhistle	A Humphreys
A Brown	G Mirfin
I Brown	R Newmark
S Brunskill	D O'Rourke
B Buller	S O'Rourke
S Carefoot	D Peat
J Clark	S Rainford
L Edge	M Robinson
R Elms	J Rogerson
S Farmer	J Schumann
K Fletcher	G Scott
S Fletcher	R Thompson
M French	R Walsh
G Hibbert	
J Hill	
M Hindle	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Director of Economic Development and Planning, Director of Resources, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Head of HR.

833 PRAYERS

The Mayor's chaplain, Reverend Tracy Swindells opened the meeting with prayers.

834 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor R Sherras.

835 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest.

836 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There was no public participation.

837 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on events he had attended since the last meeting. As this was his last meeting he thanked people who had supported him during his year of office and made particular thanks to the Mayor's Attendants, his Chaplain and to the Democratic Services and Civic Officer for their help and support.

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PRESENTATION OF LONG SERVICE AWARDS

The Mayor made a presentation to Michelle Smith, Head of HR, who had achieved 25 years' service with the Council. The Mayor thanked Michelle for her loyalty and commitment to the Council and for her dedicated work over the years.

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LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader was pleased to report that as at the 20 April 2022, the Council had 22 sponsors who were opening their houses to Ukrainian citizens and that a number of families had already arrived in the borough.

The housing team continued to work diligently and all properties inspected to date had more than met the appropriate standards. He commended the generosity of the Ribble Valley households directly helping those in need.

The Leader went on to report that the Council had now completed payment of all Covid related business grants, totalling just under £35,000,000 and which had involved the processing of over 7,000 applications.

The Council continued to process applications for reductions in business rates through the Covid Additional Relief Fund.

He also noted that commencement of payments to relevant households of £150 through the Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme was due to begin this week and that there would be further funds available for other eligible recipients going forward.

The Leader was mindful of the cost of living crisis that would likely continue for the foreseeable future and as the Council had now adopted the most generous Council Tax Support Scheme in Lancashire, he believed it would continue to help those in most need.

The Leader was also pleased to report that the Council had received an allocation of £1,967,000 over 3 years from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This funding would be brought to the Policy and Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Next the Leader was delighted that the Office for National Statistics which had assessed Ribble Valley as the happiest place to live in England in 2019, had now stated that the borough was the healthiest place to live out of 307 locations in England, with our point score increasing from 1.6 to 112.9 based on a range of criteria such as pollution, household overcrowding and noise complaints.

The Leader reflected on the recent filming which had taken place in Clitheroe and thanked all those who had been involved. The event had received a lot of support and had generated income for the borough. The Leader was particularly grateful for the efforts and hard work of the Principal Communications Officer who had worked closely with the Production Team

The Leader looked forward to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations which would include a beacon lighting at the Castle, tree planting and other celebrations and he

was also pleased to report that on the 24 May, the borough would welcome the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment with a march through, followed by a church service.

Finally the Leader thanked the Mayor for his service during his year of office. He thanked the Mayor for all that he had achieved during that time and for his efforts and commitment as the figurehead for the borough.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Fletcher asked the Leader if he could provide an update on how many Ukrainian refugees had settled in the Ribble Valley.

The Leader thanked Councillor Fletcher for his question and confirmed that the Council had carried out 14 Ukrainian property inspections.

He confirmed that the Housing Strategy Officer attended a weekly Lancashire wide meeting to receive an update on the processes and received a weekly list of additional properties to inspect. Approximately 10 of the initial inspections were families that had connection with the Ukraine and he was aware of 3 families that had arrived in the borough.

Next Councillor Fletcher asked why the Council had not officially declared climate change emergencies in line with most of the other Lancashire authorities. The Leader confirmed that the Climate Change Working Group would consider the issue and report to Policy and Finance Committee in due course.

Finally, Councillor Fletcher asked if the Government's current "Rwanda Policy" accurately reflected Ribble Valley's attitude and beliefs in respect of people in need. The Leader noted that the Government was clearly concerned at the number of migrants entering the country but had not been fully briefed on the Rwanda scheme and therefore could not offer a considered opinion at this point.

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COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Emergency committee – 8 March 2022
2. Community Services committee – 9 March 2022
3. Planning and Development committee – 10 March 2022
4. Personnel committee – 16 March 2022
5. Health and Housing committee – 17 March 2022
6. Economic Development committee – 24 March 2022
7. Policy and Finance committee – 29 March 2022
8. Accounts and Audit committee – 6 April 2022
9. Planning and Development committee – 7 April 2022
10. Licensing committee – 12 April 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above committees be received with the exception of Minute numbers 776,778,779,802 and 826.

Minute 776 – Treasury Management Policies and Practices

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve and adopt the Treasury Management Policies and Practices.

Minute 778 – Capital and Treasury Management Strategy

RESOLVED:

That the Council approves the Capital and Treasury Management Strategy.

Minute 779 – Changes to Standing Orders

RESOLVED:

That the Council approves the changes to Standing Order 13.9 to ensure clarity.

Minute 802 – Review of Representation on Outside Bodies

RESOLVED:

That the Council approves the changes as recommended by Accounts & Audit committee to the list but that following the advice received in the recent training, representatives remain as Trustees/Directors rather than observers.

Minute 826 – Whalley Cumulative Impact Assessment

RESOLVED:

That the Council approves the Whalley Cumulative Impact Assessment to form part of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Michelle Smith michelle.smith@ribblevalley.gov.uk.