

## Minutes of Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 25 January 2022, starting at 6.30 pm  
Present: Councillor T Austin (Chair)

Councillors:

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

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

### 612 MINUTE SILENCE

The meeting began with a minute's silence in memory of David Robinson, husband of Councillor Mary Robinson and former Consort, who had recently died. Members passed on their condolences and best wishes to Councillor Robinson.

### 613 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev Swindells opened the meeting with prayers.

### 614 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors R Elms, A Humphreys, M Robinson and R Sherras

### 615 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

Councillor Mirfin declared an interest in respect of his role as a Lancashire County Councillor in relation to the item on the agenda concerning Our New Deal for Lancashire. Councillor Horkin declared an interest in respect of ownership of properties and businesses in the Ribble Valley.

### 616 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There was no public participation.

617 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

618 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor began by thanking everyone for their good wishes whilst he had been incapacitated before Christmas and thanked the Deputy Mayor for standing in at various events.

Next, he reported that he had been delighted to be presented to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge during their recent visit to Clitheroe Community Hospital and noted that the Duke had asked the Chief Executive to pass on his thanks to staff for all that they had done during the pandemic.

The Mayor highlighted a number of events that he or the Deputy Mayor had attended since the last meeting, including events to commemorate Remembrance Sunday, a Charity Luncheon in November and a tour of the Main Offices on Christmas Jumper Day. The Mayor was grateful to the response of staff on the day and the funds that had been raised to support his charity through the event.

619 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by highlighting the ongoing work of the Council in helping to provide support and advice in response to the Covid pandemic. He was proud of how the Council had risen to the challenge of Covid and how it had continued to deliver services throughout, despite significant staff shortages. He thanked staff for their commitment and efforts in maintaining key services.

The Leader confirmed that the Council was also now delivering the Household Support Fund to help the most financially vulnerable residents in the borough. £90,000 of key funding was available and it would make a real difference to those residents.

He reminded Members that the Council had agreed at last year's budget to remove the 12% reduction applied to working age claimants Council Tax support. This would commence from the new financial year and eligible residents would share £148,000 in additional support for each financial year.

The Leader went on to report on the decision taken by Personnel Committee and approved by Policy and Finance Committee to increase pay for all Council workers below Director level, to help build capacity and address recruitment and retention difficulties. He confirmed that the Pay Review Group would be meeting to review Director pay in the near future.

The changes to the pay line, as agreed, would be funded from the Council's reserves and would amount to an additional costs of £2,000,000 over the next 5 years.

He noted that potential changes to income streams in the future meant that budget decisions for this year would be particularly challenging.

Next the Leader reported that a meeting had been held to consider and explore ideas to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June. It had already been agreed to provide all Parishes who applied with £500 towards Platinum Jubilee celebrations and to have a beacon lighting at Clitheroe Castle. He also noted that the scheduled

Freedom Parade by the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment would be a fitting start to the Jubilee celebrations in the Ribble Valley.

Finally, the Leader thanked all the voluntary organisations and clubs who continue to provide opportunities and support for people across the borough. He was particularly pleased to highlight the achievements of Dave Riding who had recently won Britain's first ever skiing world cup gold medal. Dave had started his skiing career at Pendle Ski Club, which the Council had previously supported with grant funding.

620

#### LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor S Fletcher, noted that malfeasance was a very serious matter because democracy was challenged when there was no longer trust between the people and their Government. He asked if the Leader would agree that as elected officials it was important that they maintain the highest possible standards of behaviour in office.

The Leader thanked Councillor Fletcher for his question and confirmed that it was indeed important as elected representatives to strive to maintain the highest possible standards of behaviour at all times.

Next Councillor Fletcher made comment regarding the market. He noted that the pandemic had highlighted the importance of the market to the community and asked if the Leader could outline the next stages in the ongoing development of Clitheroe Market.

The Leader agreed that the market was thriving, and that the intention was to use funding remaining in the Capital Programme of £78,000 to further improve the offering. He confirmed that he had asked officers to provide an update report to the next Health and Housing Committee on the changes that were being considered.

Finally, Councillor Fletcher noted that currently 99 Local Authorities and 291 MPs had supported the Local Electricity Bill. The Bill would adjust energy market rules and enable local renewable energy businesses to increase supply that would then help mitigate fossil fuel pollution and reduce fuel bills whilst giving a boost to local economies.

Councillor Fletcher asked if the Leader would consider introducing a Council motion in support of the Bill.

The Leader noted that the Local Electricity Bill sought to create a mechanism whereby locally generated energy could be sold to local people and to make it financially viable to do so. He acknowledged that this was a commendable aim but was also mindful that the energy market was going through a period of extreme volatility at present and so it would be prudent to wait until things had stabilised before any potential changes were made. He noted that the recent storm Arwen had demonstrated how dependent the country was on a stable electricity supply and the national infrastructure.

621

#### OUR NEW DEAL FOR GREATER LANCASHIRE

The Leader provided Council with an update on work undertaken towards the development of strengthened joint working, a long-term strategic plan and a County Deal for the Lancashire area and sought agreement to progress this work.

The Leader provided a comprehensive report on the initial scoping for a "New Deal for a Greater Lancashire" and urged Members to support the initial draft for further

discussion and development of a possible County deal for the Lancashire area. The matter was then debated.

RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL:

1. support the outline “Our New Deal for a Greater Lancashire” as outlined at Appendix 1 of the report as an initial draft bases for further discussion and development of a possible county deal for the Lancashire area;
2. agree the principles of governance as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;
3. agree that the Leader continue to work with Lancashire Leaders, in line with the principles agreed above and note that any formal proposals would require approval by Full Council at the appropriate time

622

COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Community Services committee – 19 October 2021
2. Planning and Development committee – 21 October 2021
3. Personnel committee – 27 October 2021
4. Health and Housing committee – 28 October 2021
5. Licensing committee – 2 November 2021
6. Economic Development committee – 4 November 2021
7. Policy & Finance committee – 9 November 2021
8. Parish Councils Liaison committee – 11 November 2021
9. Accounts & Audit committee – 17 November 2021
10. Emergency committee – 29 November 2021
11. Planning and Development committee – 2 December 2021
12. Emergency committee – 10 December 2021

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above committees be received with the exception of Minute number 428.

Minute 428 – Gambling Act 2005 – Review of Statements of Principles

RESOLVED:

That the Council adopt the Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 for 2022 - 2025

623

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk,  
Michelle Smith [michelle.smith@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.smith@ribblevalley.gov.uk).