

Minutes of Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 12 July 2022, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chair)

Councillors:

T Austin	M French
J Alcock	J Hill
S Atkinson	M Hindle
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
L Edge	M Robinson
R Elms	J Schumann
S Farmer	G Scott
S Fletcher	R Sherras

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

182 MINUTE SILENCE

A minute's silence was held in memory of Joyce Holgate MBE who had served on the council for many years and served as Mayor of Ribble Valley twice.

183 PRAYERS

The Mayor's chaplain, Rev Liz McLean opened the meeting with prayers.

184 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors S Carefoot, J Clark, A Humphreys, S Rainford, J Rogerson, R Thompson and R Walsh.

185 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

186 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr Wedgeworth asked if there was anything the Council would do to alleviate the problems of music noise nuisance, taxi noise nuisance, and anti-social behaviour, the continuing impact of which was to the detriment of the mental health and well-being of residents of Whalley in the light of further applications for new licensed premises being made in Whalley, despite the welcome renewal of the Cumulative Impact Assessment of Whalley's late night economy.

The Chair of Licensing Committee, Councillor S Brunskill, thanked Mr Wedgeworth for his question and informed him that the Council was required to consider all applications it received pursuant to the Licensing Act 2003 and its policy, but that it was a permissive regime which includes provisions for review of a premises licence where it impacted on the licensing objectives.

She outlined where the CCTV cameras were situated in Whalley and the provisions under which the taxis and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators were regulated.

She also informed Mr Wedgeworth that the management of anti-social behaviour on the streets was a police matter, and reminded him that a report had been considered by the Licensing committee regarding the late-night economy at its committee in April of this year and the actions the Council had taken to help alleviate some of the problems.

The Mayor asked Mr Wedgeworth if he had a supplementary comment and Mr Wedgeworth added that despite the actions already taken by the Council, problems continued for the residents of Whalley and he expected more enforcement.

187 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 26 APRIL 2022 AND THE ANNUAL MEETING ON 10 MAY 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2022 and the Annual meeting held on 10 May 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

188 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on a wide range of events that he had attended since he had taken up the role in May which he had found both enjoyable and rewarding.

189 PRESENTATIONS TO RETIRING HEADS OF SERVICE

The Mayor presented gifts on behalf of the Council to the former Head of Human Resources, Michelle Smith and the former Head of Planning, John Macholc who had both retired at the end of June after many years of long service.

190 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader wished the Mayor a successful year and reiterated the comments made regarding the passing of Joyce Holgate.

He went on to give an update to Council on the key priorities. Organisational capacity was continually improving with the number of vacancies having halved and success in recruiting two out of three Heads of Service.

Having attended the LGA conference he was able to report that having asked the question if areas like Ribble Valley who had used business rate growth and new homes bonus would be punished with the levelling up agenda and financial pressures on the government the response had been that we would not be punished for doing a good job. He had also asked about a multi-year settlement and the response had been that there would be a two-year one, enabling local government to look at investment plans with confidence.

The Leader informed Council that despite the early success of the bid to the Restoring your Railways fund to improve the link from Clitheroe to Hellifield it had not been successful in moving onto the next stage of the process. Consideration would

now be given to continuing the work done along with LCC colleagues and Northern Rail to create a scheme ready should further funding be made available.

The Leader reported that having engaged the BE group to help with the shared prosperity fund, a first meeting had been held with local partnership groups and the submission was on target to make the 1 August deadline. He also thought it important to make clear to organisations that they should not assume that shared prosperity funding would replace European funding received in the past.

He went on to remind members that during this period of fiscal discipline prior to the funding settlement, small but significant improvements to services continue.

Again, he was mindful of the cost-of-living crisis and of helping our residents keep as much of their money as possible, as well as with the Council Tax Support scheme, council tax rebates, the Discretionary Energy Rebate scheme and the Household support fund.

Finally the Leader spoke about the upcoming Royal Lancashire Show and Clitheroe Food Festival which would give a boost to our visitor economy.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Stewart Fletcher asked the Leader if levelling up was just another meaningless slogan.

The Leader thanked Cllr Fletcher for his question and remarked that unfortunately both the coronavirus pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis had resulted in huge government spending that may have been spent on levelling up. He was optimistic that the new Prime Minister would see levelling up as an integral part of the Government agenda. He also reminded members that this Council and the LEP had been instrumental in lobbying for the Cyber Centre to come to Samlesbury.

Next Councillor Fletcher asked if there was anything else the Council could do to support struggling residents with the cost-of-living crisis.

The Leader outlined the ways in which the Council is already helping its residents with low council tax, efficient services, council tax energy rebate grant, discretionary rebate grant, household support fund and the council tax benefit scheme. He reassured the Leader of the Opposition that any further government initiatives that were forthcoming would also be administered in the same efficient way the previous schemes had been dealt with.

Finally, Councillor Fletcher asked the Leader for his marks out of ten for Boris Johnson's premiership. The Leader responded that history would be the judge of a Prime Minister that took the country out of the Europe Union and through the worst health crisis in living memory.

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COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Council – 26 April 2022
2. Emergency committee – 5 May 2022
3. Annual Council – 10 May 2022

4. Planning and Development committee – 12 May 2022
5. Planning and Development committee – 19 May 2022
6. Community Services committee – 24 May 2022
7. Licensing sub-committee – 6 June 2022
8. Emergency committee – 6 June 2022
9. Personnel committee – 8 June 2022
10. Health and Housing committee – 9 June 2022
11. Licensing sub-committee – 14 June 2022
12. Licensing committee – 14 June 2022

Councillor G Mirfin asked a question of the Chairman under Standing Order 10 regarding the number of complaints received by the Council about the Aviary on Queen Street in Whalley over the last 18 months.

The Chairman gave a monthly breakdown of the complaints received which totalled 24 over the last 18 months mainly relating to noise and/or anti-social behaviour.

As his supplementary comment, Councillor Mirfin asked that action be taken to address the issues the residents were experiencing.

13. Economic Development committee – 16 June 2022
14. Policy & Finance committee – 21 June 2022
15. Planning and Development committee – 23 June 2022
16. Accounts and Audit committee – 29 June 2022
17. Parish Councils Liaison committee – 9 July 2021

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above committees be received.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.34 pm

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