

Minutes of Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 27 April 2021, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Brunskill (Chair)

Councillors:

J Rogerson	M Hindle
J Alcock	S Hirst
S Atkinson	B Holden
T Austin	S Hore
R Bennett	A Humpheys
D Berryman	A Knox
S Bibby	S Knox
D Birtwhistle	G Mirfin
A Brown	R Newmark
I Brown	D O'Rourke
B Buller	S O'Rourke
J Clark	D Peat
L Edge	S Rainford
R Elms	M Robinson
S Fletcher	J Schumann
M French	G Scott
J Hill	R Sherras
B Hilton	R Thompson

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.

Before the meeting started the Mayor asked for a minute silence in respect of the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

1155 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain, Father Heakin opened the meeting with prayers.

1156 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor S Carefoot.

1157 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

1158 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr Peachey asked if there was anything citizens of the borough could do to assist the Council in establishing a robust and ambitious Local Plan. The Chair of Planning and Development Committee, Councillor A Brown, thanked Mr Peachey for his question and confirmed that consultation with the public and wider relevant stakeholders was a key part of developing the Local Plan. The Council would widely promote opportunities to get involved in the consultation process.

In a supplementary question Mr Peachey asked if the Local Plan would establish risk assessment criteria to consider the impact of decisions in respect of climate change.

The Chairman confirmed that the plan was subject to a sustainability appraisal process which would be subject to its own consultation with the opportunity for people to comment on the appraisal. Consideration of climate change impacts and a delivery of sustainable development was a requirement of national policy and the Council would have to demonstrate that the plan took account of such matters.

Ms McCrum asked if Councillors would consider announcing a climate emergency in response to the new UK target of a 78% reduction in carbon emissions by 2035.

The Chair of Policy and Finance Committee, Councillor S Atkinson, thanked Ms McCrum for her question and stated that the Council's Climate Change Working Group would be looking at the Government's new target and assessing how best the Ribble Valley could make a contribution to it.

In a supplementary question Ms McCrum asked if the Council would consider creating a Ribble Valley Citizens' Assembly to work towards the target and to support the work of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Climate Change Working Group.

The Chairman confirmed that the Climate Change Working Group was currently considering a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which would be subject to public consultation in due course.

1159 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

1160 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that there had been no scheduled Mayoral duties due to the Covid pandemic, however the Mayor had taken the opportunity to speak with volunteers whenever she could. Her only official engagement had been to represent the Council at the memorial service for HRH The Prince Philip at Blackburn Cathedral.

1161 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader began by thanking the Mayor for being the longest serving concurrent Mayor.

He was pleased to report that the latest figures showed that the Ribble Valley had the lowest level of Covid infections in the whole of the Northwest of England and he thanked all borough residents and businesses for their efforts in suppressing the virus. He noted that the challenge of Covid-19 continued to be a priority and the Council still had a major role to play in delivering functions and services in support of national Covid measures and recovery plans.

The Leader expressed his sincere thanks to all staff for their hard work in response to the Covid pandemic.

Next the Leader updated Council on Local Government reorganisation in North Yorkshire and Cumbria. The approach taken to reorganisation in those areas could be a template for other two-tier areas including the Ribble Valley. The Leader

confirmed that Policy and Finance had delegated a working group of Councillors and the Chief Executive to respond to consultation on the plans.

The Leader was pleased to report that an outline business case had been presented to the “Restoring your Railways” ideas fund in respect of efforts to bring back and improve rail services to Hellifield.

Finally, the Leader ended by paying tribute to Prince Philip and his dedication to public service.

1162

LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor A Knox, asked if the Leader could confirm what actions had been taken to support staff with mental health and other issues brought about by Covid-19.

The Leader thanked Councillor Knox for his question and confirmed that the pandemic had had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of staff across the Council. The pandemic had been something that the Council had been unprepared for and the Council’s response to the situation had been reactive rather than proactive. He confirmed that a number of measures had been put in place to support staff including regular communication, increased flexibility, specific Covid risk assessments, homeworking and promotion of mental health and wellbeing services and support that was available in the staff newsletter and on noticeboards.

Going forward he was conscious that the Council needed to continue to support staff mental health and wellbeing in a proactive and sustained manner and that it would be working to that end.

Next Councillor Knox asked where the Council ranked in recycling rates as defined by National Indicator (NI) 192. The Leader confirmed that the Council’s returns for NI192 as captured by the National Waste Dataflow System were as follows:

2017/18	30.8%
2018/19	31.7%
2019/20	34.6%
2020/21	36.0% (based on quarter 1 to quarter 3 only)

In 2018/19 Ribble Valley Borough Council had been ranked 292 nationally (out of 345 authorities) and in 2019/20 Ribble Valley Borough Council had been ranked 266 nationally.

Finally, Councillor Knox asked if the Leader could report on the projected and actual average household size for each year of the Core Strategy (including projections for future years).

The Leader confirmed that the Council did not collect such data but relied on Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates and actual figures generated by the Census. For the purposes of establishing housing requirements in the Core Strategy, consultants had accounted for average household size based upon the 2011 Census. This reflected a downward trend in smaller households.

Information on the projections supplied had been set out in the Housing Requirement Update published in May 2013 for the Core Strategy Examination and this illustrated a declining trend in household size from 2.33 in 2008 to 2.21 in 2021.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

- (i) Community Services Committee – 2 March 2021
- (ii) Planning and Development Committee – 11 March 2021
- (iii) Personnel Committee – 17 March 2021
- (iv) Health and Housing Committee – 18 March 2021
- (v) Licensing Committee – 23 March 2021
- (vi) Economic Development Committee – 25 March 2021
- (vii) Policy and Finance Committee – 30 March 2021
- (viii) Parish Council Liaison Committee – 1 April 2021
- (ix) Accounts and Audit Committee – 14 April 2021
- (x) Planning and Development Committee – 15 April 2021

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meetings be received with the exception of Minute numbers 1093, 1097, 1098, 1127 and 1128.

MINUTE 1093 – Draft Cycle of Committee Meetings

RESOLVED:

That the Cycle of Committee meetings for 2021/22 be approved.

MINUTE 1097 – Capital and Treasury Management Strategy

RESOLVED:

That the Capital and Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22 be approved.

MINUTE 1098 – Treasury Management Policies and Practices 2021/22

RESOLVED:

That the Treasury Management Policy and Practices 2021/22 be approved.

MINUTE 1127 – Appointment of Independent Person

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Mrs M Nicholson as Independent Person be approved.

MINUTES 1128 – Review of Code of Conduct

RESOLVED:

That the revised Code of Conduct be adopted.

1164

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm

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