

COUNCIL
29 APRIL 2015
7.30 - 9.15 PM



Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Andy Blatchford), Councillors Mrs Angell, Allen, Baily, Mrs Barnard, Bettison, D Birch, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Ms Brown, Brunel-Walker, Davison, Dudley, Finch, Finnie, Gbadebo, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Kensall, Leake, McCracken, Mrs McCracken, McLean, Phillips, Mrs Pile, Porter, Mrs Temperton, Thompson, Turrell, Virgo, Wade, Ward, Ms Wilson and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Angell, Dr Barnard, Heydon, Ms Miller and Sargeant

49. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 February 2015 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

50. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

51. Mayor's Announcements

Mayor's Charity

The Mayor welcomed Mrs Maggie Blanks, Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund, to the meeting to receive a cheque on behalf of the charity from the Mayor's Charity. The total raised to date was £18,293.95 but additional funds were still expected.

Mrs Blanks expressed her thanks for the money raised and said that the charity had been honoured to be selected as the Mayor's Charity, that Councillor Kendall's willingness to associate his personal position with the Charity had greatly increased awareness of the illness and need for research. She also expressed thanks to the Mayor for his continued involvement in the Charity and everyone who had contributed to the wide array of activities that had raised funds. She reported that the funding would contribute towards seven new pioneering research projects around the UK.

Charter Plus Accreditation Award

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Rory Love, Chairman of South East Employers, to the meeting to present the Council's Charter Plus Accreditation Award.

Councillor Love said that it was a pleasure to present the award, particularly with the Council's long record of successful association with the Charter for Member Development. He reported that the Council had first achieved the Charter in 2010, followed by Charter Plus fifteen months later. The Council had been the first Local Authority in the region to achieve Charter Plus, and was also the first to achieve

reaccreditation. Councillor Love commented that he considered that, as a result of the focus on Member Development, the Council was stronger as a Local Authority and had highly motivated Members who were able to use their skills for the benefit of the wider Local Government family. The assessors had been extremely impressed with the profile of member development and the way in which it was embedded across the Council. The assessors had also recognised the key role that the Member Development Steering Group had played in ensuring that the member development programme met the needs of Members and ensured that they were equipped with the skills they needed and had shown a high degree of innovation. He concluded that South East Employers looked forward to the continued development of Member Development in Bracknell Forest and sharing of knowledge from Members.

Leader of Bracknell Forest Council

Councillor Bettison advised the meeting that the Council was communicating closely with Nepalese leaders in the community following the recent earthquake in Nepal. The Council would also be sending letters of condolence and support to local Nepali community leaders and the Nepali Ambassador. The Council's website would also be providing information and details of how to make a donation to support the relief effort.

Councillor Bettison was pleased to announce that the Council had been nominated in the Improved Mobility category of the Accessible Britain Challenge Awards, for their publication of the Bracknell Forest Retailers Guide. This had been produced by The Community Engagement team in partnership with Adult Social Care teams and the Regeneration Partnership.

Councillor Bettison advised Members that the Community Engagement and Equalities Team had been commended for the Local Government Achievement Awards for their work on community integration on the 'Healthier and Stronger Voices' project.

On behalf of Councillor Dr Barnard, Councillor Bettison was also pleased to report that Ranelagh School had recently been inspected by Ofsted and had retained its 'Outstanding' status.

Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Housing and Health

Councillor Birch was proud to announce that the Public Health team had been shortlisted in the Public Health Partnerships category of the MJ Awards for their work on encouraging residents to cease smoking. He added that Bracknell Forest had the highest number of sustained quitters in the South East.

Councillor Birch added that the Public Health team has been shortlisted for an award for their 'What's in Your Glass?' campaign, which had encouraged people to consider the number of calories and units in alcoholic drinks. The scheme had allowed people to make a positive change to their lifestyle.

Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration

Councillor Brunel-Walker announced that MACE had started work on the foundation piles on the new town centre area. He recorded his thanks to the Chief Executive and his team for their work on the regeneration.

Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Mrs Hayes was proud to announce that the Council's Waste and Recycling and e+ Card teams had won a Gold Award in the 'Connecting People' category at the Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (IESE) Awards 2015, in recognition of how e+ smartcard technology rewarded residents for taking part in the Council's recycling scheme. Councillor Mrs Hayes added that the team had also been shortlisted for a further recycling award in July 2015.

Councillor Mrs Hayes also recorded her thanks to Councillor Mrs Phillips for her work on defibrillators. She reported that these were now available across the borough and would be installed at Smallmead and Longhurst shortly. The location of the defibrillators across the Borough would be included on a map.

Councillor Mrs Hayes thanked her fellow Ward Councillor, Councillor Virgo, for his support in the purchasing of the large poppies which would be displayed around the Borough to mark Remembrance Day for many years to come.

Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

Councillor McCracken congratulated Corporate Services officers on their recent Silver Investors in People Award, which was an improvement on the previous Bronze Award.

Councillor McCracken was pleased to announce that a scheme to collect and recycle metals from the Borough's crematoria, with the consent of relatives, had been very successful in raising money for charity. The charities that had benefited were: CRUSE with a donation of £4,200; Daisy's Dream with a donation of £4,487; and the Mayor's Charity which had received a donation of over £1,000.

Councillor McCracken reported that 736 children from schools in the Borough had taken part in the recent Indoor Athletics Championship.

Executive Member for Transformation and Finance

Councillor Ward explained to Members that, as part of his portfolio, he was responsible for the Council's property team. He reported that the team had raised in the region of £3 million in the last two weeks with the completion of new contracts. In addition, contracts were about to be signed for the Blue Nursery site.

Councillor Ward added that most shops in neighbourhood areas away from Bracknell town centre were owned by the Council, as were a number of small industrial units across the Borough. He was pleased to report that nearly all these were currently let, generating annual income for the Council of £2.5million.

Councillor Mrs Phillips

Councillor Mrs Phillips advised the Members present that Friday 15 May 2015 was Orange Wig Day, organised by the Anaphylaxis Campaign. This aimed to show solidarity, support and raise awareness for people affected by severe allergies. Councillor Mrs Phillips encouraged the Council to join the initiative and provide support by wearing orange on 15 May 2015.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, Tim Wheadon, advised Members of an error that had occurred with regard to postal votes for the forthcoming election. He explained that the pack issued had included the ballot paper itself, an inner and outer envelope for returning the ballot paper and an instruction leaflet. However, it had come to light that the date for returning the ballot paper had been incorrectly stated on the instruction leaflet as 30 April 2015. The envelope for returning the ballot paper was showing the correct date of 7 May 2015. The Chief Executive explained that twitter, the website and Berkshire Radio had been utilised to advise residents, as well as a letter sent. The Electoral Commission had been advised of the situation and were satisfied with the steps that the Council were taking.

52. **Executive Report**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison, presented his report on the work of the Executive since that reported at the Council meeting on 25 February 2015. The Executive had met once, on 31 March 2015.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- The Executive had had approved the Joint Commissioning Strategy for People in an Unpaid Caring Role for the period 2015-2020. The new Strategy reflected recent legislation, an analysis of local needs and consultation with carers.
- The Council had established an Older Persons' Accommodation and Support Services Strategy to improve the accommodation for older people in Bracknell Forest.
- The Executive had agreed to establish a Local Housing Company (LHC) to help it meet rising demand to provide homes for homeless households, households with learning disabilities and/or autism and care leavers.
- The Executive had endorsed the principle of redeveloping the Coopers Hill site in partnership with Thames Valley Housing Association to provide a creative, performing and digital arts centre for young people in Bracknell Forest and residential housing accommodation.
- Phase 1 of the National Troubled Families Programme was due to conclude in May 2015. The Council had been extremely successful in meeting the target by the Government for Phase 1 of helping 115 families turn their lives around. This had now been formally acknowledged by the Department of Communities and Local Government who had invited the Council to engage with the second phase of the programme at an earlier stage. As an 'early starter' the Council would be working with partners to develop Phase 2, which would run for five years and extend to 380 families. The Government would be providing financial support and performance rewards.
- The Executive had endorsed the Staying Put Policy for Looked After Children and a funding model for the policy.
- The Executive had determined its response to the recommendations made by a working group of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, which had reviewed the Council's Business Rates and Discretionary Relief.

- The Executive had considered the 2015 Refresh of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014-17. It was recommended to Council by the Executive that the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014-17 – 2015 Refresh – be adopted.
- The Executive had approved the 2015/16 Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance Capital Programmes.
- The Leader had approved a number of delegations for the discharge of functions in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and in relation to actions to be taken in connection with the development of the Binfield Learning Village.
- Piling was now underway on the town centre site with steelworks due to start in early June 2015.

Councillor Bettison wished all Members good luck for the elections on 7 May 2015 and expressed his thanks to the Members who were retiring. He paid particular tribute to Councillor Ward, who was standing down after 38 years as a Borough Councillor.

Councillor Bettison also noted that this would be Alex Jack's last meeting as Borough Solicitor before his retirement, and wished him well for a long and happy retirement.

In response to Councillor Ms Brown's question, Councillor Birch confirmed that the sudden increase in the number of homeless households was due to landlords in the private rental sector increasing rents to levels that were unaffordable. This had occurred significantly more than had been anticipated and accounted for the discrepancy in the figures between the anticipated increase set out in the Quarterly Service Report and the figure in the Executive report. Councillor Birch explained that the establishment of a Local Housing Company would allow the purchase of an appropriate number of additional properties.

In response to Councillor Mrs Temperton's question regarding support for the regeneration of the town centre, Councillor Birch confirmed that the Labour Group had always provided support for the scheme.

Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014-14 – 2015 Refresh

On the proposition of Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, seconded by Councillor Brossard, it was

RESOLVED that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2014-2017 – 2015 Refresh – be adopted.

53. **The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015**

The Council considered the report proposing amendments to the Council's Constitution to ensure that the Council complied with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

On the proposition of Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, seconded by Councillor Allen, it was

RESOLVED that the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Section 12, Part 4 of the Council's Constitution be amended to comply with the 2015 Regulations, with effect from 11 May 2015.

54. **Appointment of Returning Officer**

The Council considered the report which asked Council to reaffirm the appointment of Timothy Wheadon as Returning Officer until further notice, with authority to act in respect of all related electoral, poll or referendum duties, including but not limited to, elections to the UK Parliament, European Parliament, Police and Crime Commissioner, national polls and regional polls or referenda.

On the proposition of Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, seconded by Councillor Ward, it was

RESOLVED that:

- i) the appointment of Timothy Wheadon as the Returning Officer for all local elections, including parish and town councils, with authority to act in that capacity for all related electoral poll or referendum duties be reaffirmed;
- ii) it be confirmed that insurance would be taken out and maintained in relation to the conduct of local authority elections and polls and all other electoral duties where the Council is entitled by law to do so, indemnifying the Returning Officer and the Council against legal expenses reasonably incurred;
- iii) the Returning Officer would be indemnified by the Council in the event of such insurance carrying an 'excess' clause, up to the value of such an excess;
- iv) the Cabinet Office had indemnified Returning Officers and Acting Returning Officers at the forthcoming UK Parliamentary elections be noted.

55. **Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2014-15**

The Council considered the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny which informed Members of progress made in respect of the operation and development of overview and scrutiny in Bracknell Forest during 2014/15 and outlined proposed future activities.

Councillor Leake took the opportunity to thank Members and officers involved in the Scrutiny process, noting in particular that the report of the Working Group on the Francis Report had been a finalist in the Centre for Public Scrutiny's 'Good Scrutiny

Awards' in June 2014. He also detailed the work of the Scrutiny Commission on a proposal from West London Mental Health Trust to decommission a number of sirens surrounding Broadmoor, which had resulted in West London Mental Health Trust agreeing to keep the existing sirens until the completion of the new hospital. This work had also highlighted that improvements needed to be made to the cascade warning system for schools and this had been reviewed and updated as a result.

Councillor Leake expressed his wish that the Council's scrutiny format would be reviewed to allow the Council to become a leader in the way scrutiny functioned.

On the proposition of Councillor Leake, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Commission, seconded by Councillor Virgo, it was

RESOLVED that

- i) the 2014/15 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be adopted; and
- ii) the commitment, role and value of the overview and scrutiny function be acknowledged and that non-executive Members continue to be supported in their role.

56. Member Development Annual Report 2014-15

The Council considered the Member Development Annual Report which appraised all Members of the work and progress on Member Development during the year 2014-15. The report informed Members of activities and their outcomes and outlined proposed future activities.

On the proposition of Councillor Leake, Chairman of the Member Development Charter Steering Group, seconded by Councillor Allen, it was

RESOLVED that the Member Development Annual Report 2014-15 be noted.

57. Champions' Annual Report 2014-15

The Council considered the Annual Report which detailed the work undertaken by the Council's five Champions during the year 2014-15. The report informed Members of activities and their outcomes.

Councillors Harrison, Thompson, Wade and Finnie presented their sections of the report.

In Councillor Heydon's absence Councillor Mrs Temperton queried his report and requested details of the specific activities that he had undertaken as Corporate Business Champion. In response the Mayor advised that Councillor Heydon would be asked to respond directly to Councillor Mrs Temperton.

In response to Councillor Mrs Temperton's question Councillor Harrison stated that full details were contained within his report. In response to a further question from Councillor Mrs Temperton, Councillor Harrison reported that the platforms at Bracknell Station were not currently long enough to accommodate ten-coach trains. These would be lengthened as part of an ongoing programme of improvements that would see the purchase of additional coaches and installation of a new safety system that ensured that, where longer trains could not fit onto platforms, only the doors of those carriages adjacent to a platform would open.

The Mayor thanked the Champions for their Annual Report 2014-15.

58. **Questions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10**

Councillor Mrs Temperton asked Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Housing and Health, the following published question:

The Health and Well Being Board have promised a huge revamp of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), promising earlier intervention, earlier diagnosis and improved support for children and young people suffering from emotional ill health. Action plans have been drawn up. When will these plans be realised, the promised improvements implemented and the time delays reduced?

Councillor Birch replied that the role of the Health and Well Being Board was to bring together partners from different sectors to provide support to vulnerable families. As such, the Health and Well Being Board was not able to make promises or decisions.

Councillor Birch referred to the agenda from the most recent Health and Well Being Board on 5 March 2015. He explained that a young person in the Borough today who was experiencing anxiety or mental health problems would receive improved care compared to a year ago, thanks to the work of the Health and Well Being Board. This included a wide range of awareness raising actions taken with schools to allow staff to deal with emotional problems at an earlier stage. In addition the Clinical Commissioning Group had secured additional funding of over £400,000 earlier in the year and was using this to target and provide support for young people with mental health issues and their families. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service was being recommissioned with effect from April 2015.

Councillor Birch stated that the promised improvements were being implemented as a result of investment in front-line services. He explained that not enough time had passed for the impact of the changes to be monitored but anecdotal evidence showed that outcomes were improving for young people and their families. He added that he looked forward to the first progress report, which would show that waiting times were reduced and young people were accessing care locally.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Temperton, Councillor Birch explained that the Health and Well Being Board was currently undergoing a full review, including developing performance management targets and indicators. This would feed into future performance monitoring.

MAYOR