

COUNCIL
18 JANUARY 2017
7.40 - 9.10 PM



Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Tony Virgo), Councillors Mrs McKenzie-Boyle (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, G Birch, Brossard, Brunel-Walker, Dudley, Finch, Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Hill, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Leake, McCracken, Mrs McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Ms Merry, Ms Miller, Peacey, Phillips, Porter, Skinner, Mrs Temperton, Tullett, Turrell, Wade and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Mrs Angell, Angell, Finnie, Mrs Mattick and Thompson

33. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 30 November 2016 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

34. Declarations of Interest

The Mayor declared an affected interest in Agenda Item 5: Executive Report, recommendation 5.1.2 which related to South Hill Park, of which the Mayor was a trustee. The Mayor stated that he would leave the room for this part of the item.

Councillors D. Birch and Heydon declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5: Executive Report, in relation to the draft Capital Programme 2017/18 as Board Members of Downshire Homes Board.

35. Mayor's Announcements

Wellington College

The Mayor welcomed Julian Thomas, Master at Wellington College to speak about his role at Wellington College.

The Master stated that it was an incredible time to be running a school, given the pace of change since the 1980's, the Internet age and the growing number of jobs that had been taken over by automation (30%) all these things made education at this time an exciting prospect. However against this pace of change, stood education systems in the UK which had changed very little since Wellington College had been founded in 1859. The Master felt strongly that the over reliance on a system that focussed on exam and exam results did not inspire children to learn. This had been the basis of the Master's decision last year to withdraw from league tables despite the Colleges' good performance. This system based on examinations was originally designed for middle class, predominantly boys to equip them to run businesses.

The Master stated that Wellington College aimed to provide their pupils with a skill set that would equip them to do a range of things as well as inspire them to learn. The video clip of the Master's entrance to Speech day demonstrated this as this had been designed and produced by the pupils themselves.

The Master stated that social media often created pressure on children, leading children to believe they needed to craft a lifestyle to portray on social media. It was therefore important to develop an atmosphere that allowed children to be individuals and encouraged individuality and equipped them to be independent and resilient.

Finally, the Master stated that he wanted his school to be inclusive and not seen as elitist. Wellington College sponsored three academy schools and had opened seven international schools and was keen to foster cross sector collaboration. He was pleased to have worked with several Bracknell Forest head teachers and was keen to work with the Council also.

In response to Members' queries, the Master made the following points:

- The Master had been head hunted by Wellington College, following his involvement in turning round a failing school.
- Political discourse was encouraged amongst pupils, although it could be difficult it was important that pupils could debate confidently.
- The Master did not believe that standards of education were falling behind other parts of the world, he stated that children today generally worked harder, were assessed much more and felt greater pressure. He stated that children in the UK were good at taking exams however this did not mean that they were educated well.
- Happiness lessons had been delivered at Wellington College and at the time they were introduced they were much derided. Going forward every school now delivered some kind of mental health and wellbeing learning to their pupils.

Gavin McMinn, Deputy Head Boy, Garth Hill College

The Mayor welcomed Gavin McMinn, Deputy Head Boy from Garth Hill College who was accompanied by Nick Huskinson, Assistant Principal to speak about young people and building the bridge of employment with the Council and schools.

Gavin McMinn urged the Council to be a beacon of hope for young people and to support them so that they could reach their full potential. This included encouraging the private and public sector to offer more opportunities and careers such as apprenticeships to young people so that they could achieve their goals and aspirations.

Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

Councillor McCracken was pleased to announce that the Lexicon Bracknell Half Marathon 2017 would take place on Sunday 7 May.

Councillor McCracken advised that the shared Regulatory Service with Wokingham and West Berkshire Councils was now operational and 22 employees had transferred to this new service arrangement and were now employed by West Berkshire Borough Council. Councillor McCracken recorded his thanks to these staff and for their work for the Council over the years.

Councillor McCracken was pleased to announce that the Council had won the 'Loo of the Year Award' for the 23rd consecutive year.

Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Mrs Hayes announced that there would be a waste and recycling training session run by Love Food, Hate Waste on Thursday 26 January, between 9am-12noon at the Open Learning Centre, Bracknell. She encouraged Members to attend the session if they were able.

Councillor Mrs Hayes reported that there would be a session on Waste in Planning on 23 February at 6pm in the Council Chamber to precede the Planning Committee.

Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health & Housing

Councillor Birch was pleased to report that through a great deal of hard work, there were now only two single people staying in Bed and Breakfast accommodation outside the Borough. Given the current economic environment, this was remarkable.

Councillor Birch was pleased to report that following the work of the Downshire Homes Board and the use of Tenterden Lodge, the Council had been able to generate £2.5m savings. This work had been recognised by the BBC.

Councillor Birch announced that the Bracknell Forest Council Housing Portal now had a new feature called 'My Advice' which would advise residents of likely options available to them.

Councillor Birch advised that Forest Care was now registered with the Care Quality Commission and was now providing additional services to help the frail and elderly. This had the benefit that it prevented some people from contacting the ambulance service as well as taking some pressure away from A&E.

Councillor Birch was pleased to announce that the Council's Self Care Week had been hugely successful and had exceeded all expectations. 500 young people had engaged in wellbeing support which took some pressure away from the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service. 275 people had received falls prevention advice and as a result a reduction had been seen in falls related admissions to hospital. Finally, 751 people had successfully participated in weight management schemes. Councillor Birch thanked all those that had been involved in delivering this work.

Burns Supper

The Mayor announced that there would be a Burns Supper on Friday 10 February at the Stirrups Country Manor Hotel, if Members wished to attend they should book their place as soon as possible.

Mayor's Quiz Night

The Mayor announced that this would be held on Friday 24 February and the theme for the evening would be the film Grease. Members were encouraged to attend.

36. Executive Report

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison OBE, presented his report on the work of the Executive since that reported at the Council meeting on 30 November 2016.

The Executive had met once on 13 December 2016.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- Revenue and capital proposals had been agreed for consultation and the Local Government Finance settlement had been published in late December. Government figures assumed a 5% Council Tax increase and 900 new houses by April 2017. There would be a further review at the February meeting of the Executive.
- £190k improvement work at South Hill Park was being recommended to Council.
- Some work had been undertaken on a Local Council Tax Discount Scheme to support the most vulnerable in the Borough. The Leader reported that a great deal of work had gone into this scheme and he outlined the key elements of the scheme.
- The Leader thanked Overview and Scrutiny Members for a very comprehensive and valuable piece of work on GP capacity. He reported that the Executive had fully endorsed two of the recommendations made and amended and accepted the third recommendation made.
- The Leader reported that the Council Plan Overview Report showed that more than 90% of key actions were on track or completed.

Councillors Birch and Heydon declared an interest in the Capital Programme part of this item as Board Members of the Downshire Homes Board.

In response to a query about the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme, the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health & Housing reported that a great deal of work had gone into developing this Scheme and the Scheme had been consulted upon. There was a hardship fund available for those in genuine difficulty. The Scheme would be reviewed on an annual basis and if it was discovered that disproportionate hardship was being caused, the Scheme could be adjusted.

The agenda report contained recommendations that the Council was asked to resolve.

The Mayor declared an affected interest in Agenda Item 5: Executive Report, recommendation 5.1.2 which related to South Hill Park, of which the Mayor was a trustee. The Mayor left the room whilst this item was discussed.

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

RESOLVED that:

- i) £190,000 capital funding be released in 2016/17 from the 2017/18 Capital Programme to fund the investment required at South Hill Park

On the proposition of Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health & Housing, seconded by Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- ii) the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme and the Local Council Tax Discount Summary Scheme be adopted
- iii) the operation of the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme be delegated to the Director of Adult Social Care, Health & Housing

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18.

On the proposition of Councillor McLean, seconded by Councillor Allen, it was

RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 be agreed.

38. **Membership of Committees and External Body Representation**

The Council considered the report seeking the Council's approval to the appointment of Members to fill vacancies on committees.

On the proposition of Councillor Bettison OBE, Leader of the Council seconded by Councillor Allen, it was

RESOLVED that the tabled recommendations be approved:

- i) to nominate Councillor Dr Hill as the Council's representative for the Standing Conference for Archives and
- ii) to note that the Leader had appointed Councillor Mrs Ingham to the Bracknell Forest Access Group.

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

Councillor Mrs Temperton asked Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning the following published question:

A considerable number of children and young people in Bracknell Forest have the responsibility 24/7 for the care and well-being of their parent and siblings. Last year the Council's support for the identified Young Carers was taken 'in house'.

What support is now given and what has been the impact on the life chances and emotional well-being of these Young Carers?

In response Councillor Dr Barnard stated that the original service for young carers was good but that a tailored and individualised support was seen to be needed and so the decision was taken to bring the service in house to provide this.

Currently 165 young carers had been identified and an action plan had been developed to support these young carers, it was noteworthy that not all young carers wanted the support of the local authority.

A Young Carer Group had been established. One of the main areas of work had been to ensure that young carers were school ready when they presented at school in the morning. This work had involved close working with schools and welfare teams.

Councillor Mrs Temperton stated that she would be keen to see a report on the impact of this work with reporting being included in quarterly service reports, to ensure that these young people were kept in the forefront on the Council's concerns.

The Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning stated that he would be happy to report on impact once this data had been gathered.

MAYOR