

COUNCIL
30 OCTOBER 2002
(7.30 pm to 9.40 pm)

Present: Councillors Adams, Mrs Ballin, Barnard, Beadsley, Bettison, Blatchford, Ms Brown, Browne, Edger, Fawcett, Finnie, Flood, Glasson, Grayson, Harrison, Mrs Hayes, Henfrey, Jones, Kendall, Mrs Mattick, McCracken, Mills, North, Piasecki, Mrs Pile, Mrs Ryder, Sargeant, Mrs Shilcock, Turrell, Wade and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Birch, Mrs Birch, Egan, Miss Haydon, McCormack, Simonds, Thompson and Ward

The Mayor's Chaplain Reverend Richard Neill, opened the meeting with prayers

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MRS HAYES, IN THE CHAIR

51. "Downshire" Document – Berkshire Record Office

Dr Peter Durrant, County Archivist from Berkshire Record Office, gave a short presentation on one of the "Downshire" Documents which recorded the history of Easthampstead Park and the Downshire estates from the thirteen century to the nineteenth century. The document had been on display in the Council Chamber prior to the meeting.

52. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25 September 2002 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor, subject to the removal of Councillors Adams and Ms Brown from the list of Members present and their addition to the list of apologies for absence.

53. Declarations of Interest

No Member of the Council declared any personal or prejudicial interest in any item of business on the Agenda for the meeting.

54. Mayor's Announcements

(i) Bracknell & Wokingham College – presentation

The Mayor had attended, on 29 October, the graduation ceremony of a number of Council employees who had recently qualified through the

Council's Management Development Scheme, receiving certificates and diplomas in management studies from Bracknell & Wokingham College.

(ii) Councillor Mrs Mattick on behalf of the Council

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mrs Mattick on being appointed Vice President of the Federation of Cremation Authorities

(iii) Diary Dates

The Mayor advised members of the Council that the annual service of remembrance would be held on Sunday 10 November and that the annual Schools Carol Concert would be held on 8 December 2002.

(iv) Council Photograph

Members had observed that the photographs of former Mayors had been re-hung in the Council Chamber foyer. The Mayor advised that a photograph of the whole Council would be taken at the final Council meeting before the May elections to be hung in the foyer as the first of a series of full Council photographs. She intended this to become a regular event for each new Council term.

(v) Councillor Martin Wallace

The Mayor advised the Council that she had received a letter from the family of Councillor Wallace, expressing thanks for the kind condolences of Members of the Council following the death of Councillor Wallace on 10 September 2002.

(vi) Jubilee Brooch

A letter of thanks, written on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen, had been received from Buckingham Palace expressing Her Majesty's gratitude for the Golden Jubilee brooch presented to her as a gift on behalf of the people of the Borough. Councillor McCracken then presented the last remaining brooch to the Mayor, to be added to the Mayoral collection.

55. Executive Report (Item 6)

The Leader of the Council reported on the main activities of the Executive since the meeting on 25 September 2002. These had included decisions on the following matters

- ICT Strategy 2002/03 – 2004/05
- Staff College Planning Brief
- Bracknell Market/3M Tower redevelopment
- Waste Management PFI
- Freedom of Information publication scheme
- Unauthorised traveller encampments

Councillor Mills then reported on the progress with the Joint Waste Management Private Finance Initiative project, which was being developed in partnership with Wokingham District Council and Reading Borough Council.

The Leader and relevant Executive Members responded to questions on the Executive report. Councillor Bettison then moved a recommendation made by the Executive in respect of a supplementary revenue budget approval to allow work to proceed on the Bracknell Town Centre project.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Bettison and seconded by Councillor Wade, that

- (i) additional funding of £283,000 be transferred from General Reserves to the earmarked Reserve for the Bracknell Town Centre Project to allow further work to proceed in 2002/03 and
- (ii) the commitment budget for 2003/04 and 2004/05 includes funding of £407,000 (total) to cover expenses related to the Bracknell Town Centre project and that these figures be reviewed annually in line with the Council's forward planning process.

56. **Children's Champion**

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Bettison, seconded by Councillor Barnard, that the post of Children's Champion be re-designated as Children and Young People's Champion.

57. **Budget Policy Framework – Annual Library Plan (Item 7)**

The Director of Leisure Services presented the draft Annual Library Plan 2002/03. The Director, together with the Head of Library Services and the Executive Member for Leisure Services answered questions on the Annual Library Plan.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor McCracken, seconded by Councillor Wade, that the Annual Library Plan 2002/03 be adopted.

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

Notice had been received of three questions to Members of the Executive as follows.

By Councillor Piasecki to the Executive Member for Social & Healthcare Services and Housing

“how many residents are currently on the housing waiting list?”

Councillor Barnard responded that the number of residents currently on the housing

waiting list was 1,370. He then responded to a supplementary question.

By Councillor Piasecki to the Executive Member for Education

“does the Executive Member agree that the available evidence shows that money is not the answer to improving education standards in the Borough?”

In the absence of the Executive Member for Education, the Leader of the Council responded, giving examples of improvements that had not involved additional costs and of others which had cost implications. He pointed out that the Government Standards Fund allocations to the Borough Council were for school improvement and amounted to over £5m, including capital elements. Most of the non-capital elements were match funded by the Borough Council. The Education Development Plan was the Council's published strategy for raising standards, approved by the Government, and the Plan included clear and detailed costings.

Councillor Bettison then responded to a supplementary question.

By Councillor Jones to the Executive Member for Planning and Transportation

“to lose the Director of Planning and Transportation was unfortunate; to lose the Borough Planning Officer was careless. We have now lost the Head of Planning Control. Is this not simple incompetence?”

Councillor Mrs Ballin responded that the answer was no and that if the question had in fact been prompted by any concerns that the Member had as to the ability of remaining staff to further develop the planning function in the Borough he might find the following actions, all of which had been achieved within the last 12 months, enlightening.

- Adoption of the Local Plan
- Approval of the Town Centre Masterplan
- Outlined planning permission granted in respect of Peacock Farm
- Staff College Development brief adopted as supplementary planning guidance
- Programme in place for the production of development briefs for other key sites
- Supplementary Planning Guidance on telecommunications masts adopted
- A Best Value Performance Plan including the introduction of exciting IT opportunities for development control agreed and being implemented
- Most recent results confirmed that Bracknell Forest was the top performing council in Berkshire for development control

All of this showed that it was not appropriate to credit any single post or individual with success but more to acknowledge the professionalism of the whole team.

Councillor Mrs Ballin then responded to a supplementary question.

59. **Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

(i) Motion 2/2002 was submitted by Councillor Adams and seconded by Councillor Jones. On being put to the vote the motion was carried and it was

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Jones, that Bracknell Forest Borough Council supports the campaign for doorstep recycling services to every home by 2010, with central government providing the resources for such schemes. Benefits would include jobs locally, reduced pressure for landfill sites and incinerators; benefits to the environment via further cuts in emissions in greenhouse gasses and a reduction in the demand for raw materials, so encouraging sustainable and local waste management.

(ii) Motion 3/2002 , as set out in the agenda for the meeting, was submitted. On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

MAYOR