

COUNCIL
23 OCTOBER 1997

Present: Councillors Adams, Angell, Mrs Ballin, Barnard, Bayle, Beadsley, Bettison, Birch, Blatchford, Mrs Doyle, Egan, Fawcett, Finnie, Flood, Harrison, Miss Haydon, Mrs Hayes, Mrs Hirst, Jones, Mrs Keene, McCormack, Mills, North, Onions, Mrs Pile, Ryan, Sargeant, Mrs Shillcock, Simonds, Mrs Sutcliffe, Taylor, Veakins, Wade, Ward, Wheaton and Worrall

Apologies for Absence were received from:
Councillors Mrs Clifford, Good, Grayson and Thompson

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR JAMES G FINNIE IN THE CHAIR

358. Mayor's Announcements

(i) Diana - Princess of Wales

The Mayor referred to the sad events of the early hours of Sunday 31 August 1997, the subsequent announcement of the death of Diana Princess of Wales and to the deep sense of loss experienced by residents of the Borough in common with so many others. The Mayor had written to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II expressing the Borough's condolences to Her Majesty and to the royal family and had received a reply on behalf of Her Majesty. Arrangements had been made for flowers to be laid at the Town Square flagpole in Bracknell Town Centre and for books of condolence to be opened. Many hundreds of floral tributes, cards and other expressions of condolence had been left by residents at sites all over the Borough. Arrangements were being made through the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire for passing on the personal messages and books of condolence. A number of suggestions had been made for commemorating the memory of Diana Princess of Wales in a lasting way and arrangements would be made to seek further suggestions from local residents through the next issue of Forestlink.

At the Mayor's request the Council observed a short period of silence to reflect on the memory of Diana Princess of Wales.

(ii) Councillor Mrs J Sutcliffe

On behalf of the Council the Mayor welcomed Councillor Mrs Sutcliffe to the meeting following a period of hospital treatment and recuperation.

(iii) Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor had previously circulated a list of the engagements which he, or the Deputy Mayor on his behalf had attended during the period 22 July to 23 October 1997. He further urged as many members as possible to attend a charitable event to raise funds for the annual Children in Need appeal to be held on 23 November outside The Point, Skimped Hill commencing at 7.30pm.

(iv) Corporate Management Team

The Mayor introduced and welcomed all members of the new Corporate Management Team to their first Council meeting.

359. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 21 July 1997 were approved as a correct record subject to the reference to the Mayor's Charity in Minute 189 (iv) being amended to read "Bracknell and Windsor Forest Branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society".

In connection with Motion 5/97 referred to in Minute 215, Councillor Mills advised the Council of the terms of the reply which had been received on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.

360. **Public Participation at Meetings - Petition**

A petition signed by over 250 local residents was presented to the Council by Mr Richard King and his friends in the terms set out below.

The undersigned respectfully ask that you receive this petition and consider:

- * The popularity of wheeled sports throughout the Borough of Bracknell Forest namely; BMX bikes, rollerblades and skateboards.
- * The lack of safe, accessible and affordable facilities available to accommodate these popular sports.
- * The safety concerns when these sports are played in the street or inappropriate areas.
- * And we ask that you, as our elected representatives, assist us in finding a safe and secure location to practice these sports where we do not pose a problem to other residents.

Richard King spoke in support of the petition which was referred to the Leisure Services Committee for consideration and report.

361. **Unitary 98 Interview Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Unitary 98 Interview Committee held on 1 August 1997 was submitted.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Bettison, duly seconded, that the report be received.

362. **Social Services Transition and Housing Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Social Services Transition and Housing Committee held on 9 September 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Angell, seconded by Councillor Worrall, that the report be received.

363. **Public and Environmental Services Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Public and Environmental Services Committee held on 11 September 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon. Arising from Minute 236 (Local Government Reorganisation - Position Statement) the Chairman reported that Councillor North had been nominated to serve on the Joint Committee for the Thames Valley Police Authority and the Shadow Police Authority.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Mills, seconded by Councillor Egan, that the report be received and that the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

364. **Leisure Services Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on 16 September 1997 was submitted.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor North, seconded by Councillor Mrs Hayes, that the report be received.

365. **Direct Services Board**

The report of the meeting of the Direct Services Board held on 24 September 1997 was submitted.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Sargeant, seconded by Councillor Miss Haydon, that the report be received.

366. **Education Transition Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Education Transition Committee held on 25 September 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Ward, seconded by Councillor Barnard, that the report be received.

367. **Social Services Transition and Housing Committee**

The report of the special meeting of the Social Services Transition and Housing Committee held on 30 September 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Angell, seconded by Councillor Worrall, that the report be received.

368. **Planning and Transportation Committee**

The report of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held on 2 October 1997 was submitted.

The Chairman indicated that Minute 318 was submitted as a separate item in order to facilitate consideration of the recommendation contained in that minute.

RESOLVED on the proposition of the Councillor Mrs Ballin, seconded by Councillor Mrs Doyle, that:

- (i) with the exception of Minute 318 the report of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held on 2 October 1997, be received and that the recommendations contained in Minute 313 (Local Government Reorganisation - Position Statement) be adopted;
- (ii) Minute 318 (Bracknell Forest Borough Local Planning Review and Further Proposed Changes) be received and that the recommendation contained therein be adopted.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.20pm to enable the Mayor to take further advice in connection with consideration of the previous item.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council reconvened at 8.30pm and the Mayor advised that, following representations, he would allow a short debate arising from Minute No 318 notwithstanding the Council's decision to adopt the recommendation.

There then followed a debate arising from the Council's decision to publish further proposed changes to the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan in respect of development proposals for land at Peacock Farm. Councillors Mrs Ballin, Jones, Mrs Keene, Sargeant, McCormack, Mrs Doyle and Flood participated.

369. Strategy & Policy Committee

The report of the meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee held on 15 October 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon. In connection with Minute 347 (Developing Corporate Identity) at the request of the Chairman, Councillor Birch, Chairman of the Corporate Identity Focus Group, advised the Council of the future intentions of the Focus Group in relation to the further development of corporate identity including consideration of the initial results from consultation processes, cost estimates, initial introduction of implementation plan and development of a corporate identity manual. A presentation to members would be made with recommendations to a special meeting of the Council to be arranged on a date to be determined.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Bettison, seconded by Councillor Birch, that the report be received and that the following recommendations be adopted:-

Minute 343 - Berkshire Probation Service
Minute 344 - Council Meeting - February 1998

370. Strategy and Policy Committee

Prior to consideration of this item, Councillors Mrs Doyle, Fawcett, Harrison, Mrs Hayes, Onions, Mrs Pile, Ryan, Simonds and Taylor who would be involved in determining planning applications relating to the redevelopment of Bracknell town

centre withdrew from the Council Chamber. The members concerned returned to the Chamber at the conclusion of discussion of this item.

The report of the special meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee held on 21 October 1997 was submitted and the Chairman answered questions thereon. The Chairman further agreed to provide Councillor Mrs Keene with a written reply arising from a question on Minute 353.

RESOLVED on the proposition of Councillor Bettison, seconded by Councillor Birch, that the report be received and that following recommendations contained therein be adopted:-

Minute 354 - Transition Costs Budget

Minute 356 - Bracknell Town Centre Redevelopment: Terms for a development agreement.

371. **Questions - Standing Order 9**

- (i) Question to Chairman of Strategy and Policy Committee (Councillor Bettison) by Councillor McCormack.

Given the commitment by Berkshire County Council to transfer on the 1 April 1998 to the six Unitary Authorities a balance of at least £15m, can the Leader of the Council explain what evidence exists to suggest that this objective will be achieved?

Reply by Councillor Bettison

In replying Councillor Bettison advised that, whilst, in common with the other Berkshire Districts, the Council had in the past been lead to believe that the balance of £15 million referred to would be in cash, it was now clear that much of the closing balance would be in the form of sundry properties described as unencumbered assets. The amount of cash balances would not be known until August 1998 when the County Council, final accounts would be nearing completion. Early notice would be provided during the process of closing the accounts.

Councillor Bettison then responded to a supplementary question from Councillor McCormack.

- (ii) Question to Chairman of Strategy and Policy Committee (Councillor Bettison) by Councillor McCormack

Covering the period to date, can the Leader of the Council confirm the total cost to this Council of arrangements to achieve transition to Unitary Status? In addition, what costs are anticipated up to the 1 April 1998?

Reply by Councillor Bettison

Councillor Bettison reported that the position remained exactly as reported to the Strategy and Policy Committee at its meeting on 21 October 1997 (Minute 354 refers). Of the revised total transition costs budget approved at that time and amounting to £15,259,000, some £11.2 million had been committed to date.

Councillor Bettison then responded to a supplementary question.

- (iii) Question to Chairman of Social Services Transition and Housing Committee (Councillor Angell) by Councillor Bayle

Could the Chairman give a brief update on progress relating to the implementation of this years Community Care Plan in Bracknell

Reply by Councillor Angell

Before replying to the question, Councillor Angell sought clarification as to the municipal year referred in the question and it was established that the question related to the development of the new unitary Council's Community Care Plan in 1998/99.

Councillor Angell then indicated that County policy staff would be assisting the Director of Social Services and Housing and other posts currently under recruitment in the development of a comprehensive Community Care Plan tailored to the needs of the new Council.

Councillor Angell then replied to a supplementary question.

- (iv) Question to Chairman of Social Services Transition and Housing Committee (Councillor Angell) by Councillor Mrs Shillcock

Could the Chairman specify the respective responsibilities of the Director, Deputy Directors and Service Heads in relation to strategy, policy and planning in the new structure for social services and housing.

Reply by Councillor Angell

Councillor Angell indicated the range of responsibilities to be undertaken by the Director of the combined department and by the Assistant Directors and Heads of Service together with the Head of Strategy and Support Services.

Councillor Angell then responded to a supplementary question.

372. Reports by Members of the Council and Other Representatives

The Council received a report by Councillor North on a meeting of the Blackwater Valley Recreation and Countryside Management Service.

373. Local Government Reorganisation - Appointments to Statutory Posts

The Chief Executive reported on the need for the Council under existing legislation, to appoint or designate Officers for specific purposes.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Mr Gordon Scotland Mitchell (Chief Executive) be appointed as the Council's Head of Paid Service with effect from 23 October 1997;
- (ii) Mr Christopher John Herbert (Borough Finance Officer) be appointed as the Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 23 October 1997; and

- (iii) Mr Timothy Ralph Wheadon (Director of Corporate Services) be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 23 October 1997.

374. **Membership of Council**

The Council noted that Councillor Mrs Jean Sutcliffe had now returned to Council duties following a period of hospital treatment and that the substitute appointments which had been made at the last meeting of the Council (Minute 212 refers) should now be rescinded.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Jean Sutcliffe be reappointed to serve on the undermentioned Committees, Sub Committees and Outside Bodies for the remainder of the current year and that existing substitute appointments be cancelled.

Social Services Transition and Housing Committee

Education Transition Committee

Access Committee

Voluntary Grants Panel

Social Services Transition Sub Committee

Education Consultation Panel

Education Quality Assurance Sub Committee

Christmas Festivities and Millennium Sub Committee

Crime Reduction Steering Group

Harmans Water Community Association

Bracknell Age Concern

375. **Calculation of Council Tax Base 1998/99**

The Borough Finance Officer submitted draft calculations for the Council tax base for 1998/99 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 and subsequent amendments.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the report of the Borough Finance Officer for the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 1998/99 be approved; and
- (ii) pursuant to the Borough Finance Officer's report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation to Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the amount calculated by the Bracknell Forest Borough Council as its Council Tax Base and for each parish for the year 1998/99 shall be as follows:-

	£
Binfield	3,210
Bracknell	17,130
Crowthorne	2,340
Sandhurst	7,610
Warfield	3,920
Winkfield	<u>6,290</u>
Bracknell Forest	<u>40,500</u>

376. **Motions - Standing Order 6**

Motion 7/97

The following Motion was moved by Councillor Mrs Keene and seconded by Councillor Bayle.

This Council deplores candidates standing for election using misleading party names with the intention to deliberately deceive the electorate.

We will support this government in any measures it introduces to prevent such deception happening in the future.

An amendment in the terms of the resolution set out below was moved by Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor Bettison and this was accepted by the mover and seconder of Motion 7/97.

On being put to the meeting the revised Motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that

This Council deplores candidates standing for election with the intention to deliberately deceive the electorate.

However, we accept that names can be misleading without being deliberately so and we would not want legislation which would reduce people's ability to participate in the democratic process.

We will support this Government in any measures it introduces to prevent deception but would need to be convinced that any legislation did not reduce people's right to participate in the democratic process.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9.55pm.

MAYOR