

COUNCIL
21 SEPTEMBER 2011
7.30 - 8.35 PM



Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Chris Turrell), Councillors Mrs McCracken (Deputy Mayor), Angell, Mrs Angell, Baily, Mrs Ballin, Mrs Barnard, Dr Barnard, Bettison, Birch, Blatchford, Brossard, Ms Brown, Davison, Dudley, Finch, Finnie, Gbadebo, Harrison, Mrs Hayes, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Kendall, Kensall, Leake, McCracken, McLean, Ms Miller, Mrs Pile, Porter, Sargeant, Mrs Temperton, Thompson, Virgo, Wade, Ms Whitbread and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Allen, Mrs Birch, Brunel-Walker, Ward and Ms Wilson

17. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 July 2011 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

18. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19. Mayor's Announcements

Britain in Bloom

The Mayor was pleased to announce that Bracknell Forest had achieved a gold award in the Britain in Bloom competition. The project was a partnership between Bracknell Town Council, Bracknell Regeneration Partnership and Bracknell forest Homes together with Bracknell Forest Council officers. It was noted that the scoring no longer focused upon municipal flowers but also considered how organisations work together and recycling initiatives. The Mayor thanked everyone involved in achieving this award.

Mayor's Charity 2011-12

The Mayor reminded Members that the next Charity event was being held on Monday 26 September at the Red China Restaurant in the High Street and that places were still available from the Mayor's office.

Crematorium Service

The Mayor had attended the annual multifaith service which was held at the Easthampstead Park Crematorium on Sunday 4 September for the bereaved. The Mayor thanked the officers involved in organising this important service and his Chaplain for his address.

Heritage Weekend

The Mayor reported that he had attended Choral Evensong at St Michael & St Mary Magdalene Church on Sunday 11 September to celebrate Heritage Days in the Borough.

Remembrance Service

The Mayor advised Members that the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service had held a Remembrance Service for two fire fighters who had died in the line of duty 35 years ago and everyone was thankful that there had been no casualties since. The event was also the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 incident in which one in ten deaths were fire fighters.

Civic Service

The Mayor reminded Members that the Civic Service was being held on Sunday 16 October at 3pm at St. Paul's Church, Harmanswater. Invitations would be circulated shortly.

Executive Members for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

Councillor McCracken was pleased to announce that Revenue Services, the team that delivers tax, rates and cashier services had been reaccredited with ISO9001 standard.

Councillor McCracken was proud to reveal that Popes Meadow, Shepherds Meadow, Memorial Park and Lily Hill Park had all retained their green flag status. It was noted that Popes Meadow had been in receipt of the standard since the scheme was launched and that Shepherds Meadow and Memorial Park's success was in partnership with Sandhurst Town Council.

Councillor McCracken reported that Bracknell libraries had become the third in the county to offer free audio book downloads and the service had been launched by Harry Potter star Miriam Margolyes in August.

Executive Member for Children and Young People

Councillor Dr Barnard congratulated officers involved with Larchwood respite care centre as it had been judged 'outstanding' at an unannounced inspection which was tested against the new and more stringent Ofsted framework. He was proud to report that as well as covering the statutory responsibilities the team were sensitive to the small details around the particular needs of the children staying there.

Executive Member for Education

Councillor Kendall was pleased to announce that exam results within the borough had improved across all stages of education:

- 354 students achieved A Levels with average points of 756 which was higher than the national average of 744. This was a pass rate of 97.82% which was higher than the national average of 97.8%
- 97.8% of GCSE students achieved five A* to G results
- Results at Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were equal to or better than the national average

Councillor Kendall advised Members of the various building projects which had taken place at schools over the summer holidays including Cranbourne; Sandy Lane and Holly Spring. Kennel Lane Special School's works had been progressed around the needs of the pupils and the challenges presented by the site and the new school at Jennets Park had been completed on time and on budget.

20. **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 20 July 2011. The Executive had met once on 6 September 2011.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

Strategic Developments:

- Implementation of Older Persons Accommodation & Support Services Strategy which had been agreed in July 2011, principle agreements to transfer land at Garth to Bracknell Forest Homes and sale of Binfield Nursery, subject to planning permission. This item was discussed at a Call-in meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 21 September 2011.

Inspections:

- Adult Learning had received 'satisfactory' overall provision and an action plan had been agreed
- Unannounced Children's Social Care Contact and Referral & Assessment Team showed that there were several strengths, one area for development and overall found to have a very robust duty system and an action plan had been agreed
- Youth Offending Services had agreed an improvement plan and were shown to have better than average results in relation to Safeguarding, Risk of Harm to others and Likelihood of reoffending.

Overview and Scrutiny

- Two recommendations had been accepted in relation to the review of Bracknell Healthspace
- 4 questions had been responded to in relation to the Review of Draft Office Accommodation Strategy
- Older Persons Accommodation & Support Services Strategy had been subject to Overview and Scrutiny call-in

Performance

- Performance Management Framework had been reviewed with retention of key elements but with more focus upon analysis rather than activity
- Corporate Performance Overview Report demonstrated performance generally on track against key objectives
- 20 Local Government Ombudsman complaints had been received in 2010/11 with only six of those investigated
- Safeguarding Adults partnership Board Annual Report showed that sound progress had been made in 2010/11 and ten key objectives for 2011/12 were agreed

21. Food Law Enforcement Plan

The Council considered the report regarding ratification of the Food Law Enforcement Plan 2011-2012 in accordance with the policy framework. The Plan addresses all matters relating to food hygiene, food standards and the sale of animal foodstuff.

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

RESOLVED that

- i) the Council noted the supporting information in relation to the Food Law Enforcement Plan and
- ii) the Food Law Enforcement Plan for 2011-2012 be ratified.

22. Member Development Annual Report

The Council considered the Member Development Annual Report 2010-11 which appraised all Members of the work and progress on Member Development during the year 2010-11 and so far in 2011-12. The report informed Members of activities and their outcomes and outlined proposed future activities.

Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and a member of the Member Development Charter Steering Group highlighted the achievement of Charter Plus standard and that it had been accomplished with considerable contribution from the Steering Group and the Council's Members. He emphasised that this could not have been realised without the support given to Member Development by officers Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services and Kirsty Hunt, Principal Democratic Services Officer (Governance).

Councillor Leake, Chairman of the Steering Group endorsed Councillor McCracken's words. He noted that the high level of contribution which members were able to make in both decision making and Overview and Scrutiny activities considering both decisions and future policies was, in part, due to effective member development.

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

RESOLVED that

- i) the Member Development Annual Report 2010 - 11 be noted; and
- ii) the Member Development Strategy 2011 – 15 be approved.

23. Question Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10

(i) Councillor Ms Brown asked Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing the following published question:

In view of proposals for new extra care homes currently to be sited in two areas in the Borough (near Bracknell Town Centre and at the Binfield Council Nursery), can you give residents firm assurances that a mix of private and affordable extra care homes will be made available at both these sites for local residents?

In response Councillor Birch stated that technically he was unable to give firm assurances as the decisions regarding proportions of affordable provision would be decided at the planning stage. Those decisions would be supported by the Council's strong policies on delivery of a good mix of provision. The decision that had been

made had been in principle and the proposal would be worked up for planning consideration. At that time the proposal would detail if and in what form the delivery of extra care homes would take and therefore the proportion of private and affordable units. Members would, at this stage, be given the opportunity to review what was being proposed.

24. **Motion Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

Motion 03/2011 was moved and seconded by Councillors Ms Brown and Mrs Temperton respectively as follows:

“Given that we have a growing borough with many young families and an increasing older population, the case for a local hospital is more compelling than ever.

We know that when it opens, the Bracknell Healthspace will replace a number of services currently provided by Heatherwood Hospital, and this will be used to undermine the Hospital’s viability.

A hospital and a healthspace provide complementary functions. Reflecting the overwhelming support of the residents of the Borough of Bracknell, this Council will oppose the closure of Heatherwood Hospital.”

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Virgo, accepted by Councillor Ms Brown and became the substantive motion:

“Given that we have a growing borough with many young families and an increasing older population, the case for better local health services is as compelling as ever. There is a PCT consultation into the restructuring of local health service provision, at this time, which may see the Bracknell Healthspace replace some services currently provided at Heatherwood Hospital and other locations.

GP Surgeries, hospitals, special units like Brant’s bridge, and the Healthspace will all provide complementary functions. To reflect the overwhelming support residents have for improved and sustainable local health services this Council will continue to work closely with our GP’s, the PCT, Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Foundation Trust and patient groups to get the best possible health services at Heatherwood and all health service locations locally.”

On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

MAYOR