

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 25th November, 2015

Present:- The Mayor. Councillor Sandra Hambleton – in the Chair

Councillors Allport, Astle, Bailey, Beech, Braithwaite, Burgess, Cooper, Cooper, Dymond, Eagles, Eastwood, Fear, Frankish, Hailstones, Hailstones, Hambleton, Harper, Heesom, Holland, Huckfield, Johnson, Johnson, Kearon, Loades, Mancey, Matthews, Naylor, Northcott, Owen, Parker, Peers, Pickup, Plant, Proctor, Reddish, Robinson, Rout, Shenton, Simpson, Snell, Stringer, Stubbs, Sweeney, Tagg, J Tagg, Turner, Walklate, Waring, Welsh, Wemyss, Wilkes, Williams, Williams, Winfield and Woolley

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bates, Cllr Wing and Cllr Wallace.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Pickup and Cllr Stubbs declared an interest in the Leader's Report, paragraph 9.

3. **MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

4. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor confirmed that her Spring Ball would be held in The Ballroom of Keele Hall on 8 April. Tickets were priced at £37 each and would be available from Peter Whalan from 1 January 2016.

The Civic Carol Service was to be held in The Parish Church of St Giles on 20 December 2015 from 6.30pm. All were welcome. The Service would be followed by Tea and mince pies in the church hall.

There would be a ceremony to grant Freedom of the Borough to Sgt Watchman (V) and to Neil Baldwin in Keele Hall on 26 November at 7pm. Many councillors had responded to the invites sent out. Those that had not were still welcome to attend.

5. **REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS - COUNCIL SIZE**

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report requesting Members to consider reviewing the current Council size. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had acknowledged that currently this authority with 60 members was at the top of the range when compared to its 'CIPFA nearest neighbours group'.

Resolved:

(a) That the current council size of 60 members be reduced.

(b) That the number of elected Members should be in a range between 42 to 48.

6. LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

A report was submitted requesting Members to approve a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the borough area for the financial year 2016/17.

Resolved:

That the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council area as detailed is adopted for the financial year 2016/17.

7. DRAFT LICENSING POLICY 2015

A report was submitted to advise Members of the updated draft Licensing Policy as agreed by the Licensing Committee on 22nd October 2015.

Resolved:

That the updated Licensing Policy be adopted.

8. DRAFT GAMBLING POLICY 2015

A report was submitted to advise Members of the updated draft Gambling Policy as agreed by the Licensing Committee on 22nd October 2015.

Resolved:

That the revised Gambling Policy be adopted.

9. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - REPORT WILL BE SENT TO FOLLOW

A report was submitted to provide an update on the activities and decisions of Cabinet together with the Forward Plan.

A question was raised as to how many meetings had been cancelled recently. The Leader stated that only one Cabinet meeting had been cancelled to help make best use of the available resources.

In relation to Item 4, members queried what was meant by 'significant' regarding land sales at Sheldon Grove. The Leader stated that this item was currently subject to a call in and that and questions should wait until after this had taken place. The same was said of any questions relating to Maxims as this was also subject to a call in.

In relation to Item 6, Members queried whether the actions recommended in the peer review had been completed satisfactorily.

A member also drew the Leader's attention to Item 2 and requested that the Leader remain open to the possibility of some short term borrowing to help finance the capital programme.

The Leader also stated that there was currently no update in relation to the Joint Local Plan with Stoke on Trent City Council.

10. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Resolved:

That the reports of the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees be received.

11. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES**

Resolved:

That the reports of the Chairs of the Regulatory Committees be received.

12. **QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

No questions had been submitted.

13. **MOTIONS OF MEMBERS**

The following members declared an interest in the item as they were members of a trade union:

Cllr Wemyss
Cllr Reddish
Cllr Pickup
Cllr Stubbs
Cllr Welsh
Cllr Williams
Cllr Robinson
Cllr Shenton
Cllr Mrs Williams
Cllr Hambleton
Cllr Kearon
Cllr Rout
Cllr Bailey
Cllr Burgess
Cllr Winfield
Cllr Eastwood
Cllr Snell
Cllr Plant
Cllr Eagles

A request was made for a named vote:

Astle	YES	Heesom	NO	Shenton	YES
Bailey	YES	Holland	NO	Simpson	YES
Beech	YES			Snell	YES
Braithwaite	ABSTAIN	Huckfield	ABSTAIN	Stringer	YES
Burgess	YES	Johnson (Mrs)	YES	Stubbs	YES
Cooper	NO	Johnson	NO	Sweeney	NO
Cooper (Miss)	NO	Kearon	YES	Tagg (John)	NO
Dymond	YES	Loades	NO	Tagg (Simon)	NO
Eagles	YES	Mancey	NO	Turner	YES
Eastwood	YES	Matthews	NO		
Fear	NO	Naylon	YES	Walklate	YES
Frankish	NO	Northcott	NO	Waring	NO
Hailstones (Mrs)	NO	Owen	ABSTAIN		
Hailstones	NO	Parker	ABSTAIN	Welsh	YES
Hambleton (Mrs)	YES	Peers	NO	Wemyss	YES
Hambleton	YES	Pickup	YES		
Harper	NO	Plant	YES	Wilkes	YES
		Proctor	YES	Williams (Mrs)	YES
		Reddish	YES	Williams	YES
		Robinson	YES	Winfield	YES
		Rout	YES	Woolley	ABSTAIN

For: 31
 Against: 19
 Abstain: 5

Resolved:

That the Council:

1. Support the UNISON, GMB and the TUC's campaign to protect the right to strike.
2. Write to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills stating the council's opposition to the government's proposals on trade unions.
3. Write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government stating the opposition to the interference of central government in local industrial relations as it is against the spirit of localism.
4. Ask the Leader to write to to all Members of Parliament covering the Borough and regional members of the House of Lords informing them of our position and asking them to oppose and vote against the Bill.5. Continue to value the importance of meaningful workforce engagement and representation through trade unions in Newcastle-under-Lyme Council.

This Council further resolves, that in the event that the government's proposals become law, in so far as is lawful for the council as an employer to:

- A. Continue to allow recognised trade unions to use subscriptions through payroll, or otherwise support trade unions' efforts to move members onto direct debit subscriptions, through allowing access to workers and as much notice as possible of any changed arrangements.

B. Maintain current arrangements on "facility time" for trade union reps to represent their members.

C. Commit not to use agency workers to break strikes.

14. **RECEIPT OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

15. **URGENT BUSINESS**

An urgent item had been accepted by the Mayor on the grounds that it met the provisions for such matters as set out in Appendix 7, Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.

The item related to the formulation of a policy at the highest level, on a cross-party basis, to ensure fairness and transparency in the policy for management and disposal of council assets, but particularly with regard to disposal of green spaces for residential use.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Holland and seconded by Cllr Reddish.

It was confirmed that time scales were critical regarding the recommendations as Council would need to agree its budget in February 2016.

A named vote was requested:

Astle	NO	Heesom	YES	Shenton	NO
Bailey	NO	Holland	YES	Simpson	NO
Beech	NO	Huckfield	YES	Stringer	YES
Braithwaite	YES	Johnson (Mrs)	NO	Stubbs	NO
Burgess	NO	Johnson	YES	Sweeney	YES
Cooper	YES	Kearon	NO	Tagg (John)	YES
Cooper (Miss)	YES	Loades	YES	Tagg (Simon)	YES
Dymond	NO	Mancey	YES	Turner	NO
Eastwood	NO	Matthews	YES	Walklate	YES
Fear	YES	Naylon	YES	Waring	YES
Frankish	YES	Northcott	YES	Waring	
Hailstones (Mrs)	YES	Owen	YES	Welsh	NO
Hailstones	YES	Parker	YES	Wemyss	YES
Hambleton (Mrs)	NO	Peers	YES	Wilkes	YES
Hambleton	NO	Pickup	NO	Williams (Mrs)	NO
Harper	YES	Plant	NO	Williams	NO
		Proctor	NO	Winfield	NO
		Reddish	YES		
		Robinson	NO		
		Rout	NO		

For: 29

Against: 23

Resolved:

That the Council:

1. Establish an Asset Policy Committee that shall:
 - a) Begin work immediately and exist until the date of the next meeting of Full Council
 - b) Produce a completed report to a Special meeting of the Council by no later than the end of January 2016 so that this can inform the preparation of the Asset Management Strategy 2016/17 and the budget setting process
 - c) Be composed of seven councillors and have authority to co-opt up to two independent members (who shall be non-voting) to assist the Committee in its work
 - d) Have a remit to recommend a policy for the disposal of the Borough Council's land assets for residential use in future
2. Request that Cabinet suspends the sale of land assets solely for residential use and included in the Asset Management Strategy, while the Asset Policy Committee is undertaking its work.

THE MAYOR. COUNCILLOR SANDRA HAMBLETON
Chair