

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 16th April, 2014

Present:- The Mayor, Mr Eddie Boden – in the Chair

Councillors Miss Walklate, Mrs Heames, Welsh, Mrs Johnson, Studd, Clarke, Cooper, D Becket, Mrs Beech, Cairns, Matthews, Olszewski, Wemyss, Wilkes, Mrs Williams, Williams, Hailstones, Mrs Hailstones, Allport, Eagles, Kearon, Taylor.J, Waring, Miss Olszewski, Loades, Holland, Bailey, Miss Cooper, Jones, Miss Reddish, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Mrs Heesom, Snell, Sweeney, Mrs Bates, White, Miss Mancey, Mrs Burgess, Eastwood, Baker, Mrs Peers, Plant, Stringer, Stubbs, Turner, Mrs Winfield and Rout

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Burnett, Cllr Tagg, Cllr Hambleton, Cllr Mrs Hambleton, Cllr Mrs Cornes, Cllr Fear and Cllr Mrs Astle.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April be agreed as a correct record.

4. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor thanked Members who had attended the Spring Ball and announced that the tombola and raffle had raised £1718 for my Charity Fund.

5. **FAIR TRADE STATUS FOR THE BOROUGH**

The Mayor welcomed Mrs Hilary Jones to the meeting. Mrs Jones announced that the Fair Trade Status granted to the Borough had been renewed until December 2015 and thanked the Council for the support it had provided to the cause. The Mayor thanked Mrs Jones for all of her work and for the recognition awarded to the Council. The Council Leader also thanked Mrs Jones on behalf of the whole Council.

6. **REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE HELD ON 31ST MARCH 2014 - AGE OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES**

Draft Minute from the meeting of Full Council held on Wednesday 16th April 2014.

A report was submitted to request that the Council endorse the decisions made by the Public Protection Committee at its meetings held on the 31st March 2014 concerning the Councils policy relating to the age of Hackney Carriage vehicles.

The Chair of the Public Protection Committee stated that he supported the recommendations. The Council had a duty to keep residents safe and the recommendations would contribute to the creation of a cleaner, greener and more sustainable Borough.

Some Members questioned why the age limit of 8 years had been agreed upon. It was stated that this would bring the hackney carriage vehicle policy in line with the private hire vehicle policy thus avoiding any inconsistency in Council Policy.

The Chair of the Public Protection Committee stated that engineering reports had been provided to the meeting of the Committee held on 31st March 2014 which had informed the final recommendation.

Resolved: That the Council ratify the recommendation made by the Public Protection Committee at the meeting held on 31st March 2014.

7. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE - ENFORCED SALE DELEGATED AUTHORITY

A report was submitted requesting Council to put appropriate delegations in place for the use of Enforced Sale powers under the Law of property Act 1925 to help achieve the aims of the Empty Homes Strategy 2012 – 17.

Enforced Sale was a tool to help change the ownership of an empty home, currently its use was not in the scheme of delegations. The reason for this report was to ensure appropriate delegations were in place to use the powers in line with the principles contained in the Council's Empty Homes Strategy 2012 – 17 and the Council's vision "To create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe".

Resolved: That the power to commence Enforced Sale under the Law of Property Act 1925 be delegated to the Public Protection Committee.

8. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

A report was submitted in relation to the Council's Constitution. The purpose of the report was to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the Constitution and to ensure that it was up to date and fully complied with the law.

An amendment was submitted in relation to substitutes.

Resolved: That all the recommendations contained within the report be agreed along with the amendment in relation to substitutes.

9. PROPOSED CHANGES TO ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

A report was submitted to advise the council of proposals regarding changes to the election cycle for Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council and to outline the steps that needed to be taken should the Council choose to amend this cycle.

An amendment was moved by Cllr Jones

1. That consideration be given simultaneously to reviewing the number of councillors, number of wards and ward boundaries in the Borough, consulting the Electoral Commission as required.

2. That a decision on recommendations a) to d) in the item report be deferred until officers have considered these other matters and produced a report.

The amendment was seconded by Cllr Miss Reddish.

A vote was taken on the amendment:

16 voted in favour of the amendment and 31 voted against the amendment therefore the amendment fell and debate returned to the original recommendations.

The recommendations were moved and seconded and a vote was taken with 32 Members voting in favour and 4 voting against.

Resolved:

a) That consultation on proposals to change the election cycle from thirds to whole council elections be commenced.

b) That subject to agreement to (a), the consultation runs from the start of July 2014 until the end of August 2014.

c) That a report on the outcome of the consultation be brought back to a special meeting of the Council in October 2014.

d) That the Council determines at that special meeting whether to move to whole council elections or whether to retain the current cycle of elections by thirds.

10. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A report was submitted by the Council Leader to provide an overview of the actions of the Cabinet and individual portfolio holders since the last full meeting of the Council.

Resolved: That the report be noted

11. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Verbal and written updates were received from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Resolved: That the updates be received.

12. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Verbal and written updates were received from the Chairs of the Regulatory Committees.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

13. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

A question had been submitted by Cllr Sweeney asking whether the leader could confirm or deny allegations made in the Sentinel Newspaper regarding the reason that Matt Taylor had resigned from the council.

The Leader stated that he was not aware of the allegations made in the Sentinel.

14. MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

A motion had been submitted by Cllr David Loades, the motion was seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

The motion stated:

This Council believes that there has been insufficient scrutiny of the sites which have been put forward for disposal in the Asset Management Strategy and calls for the immediate formation of a cross party working group to review all of the processes involved in identifying land for disposal.

A vote was taken on the motion with 17 voting in favour and 29 voting against.

Resolved: That the motion not be carried.

15. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

A petition was submitted by Cllr Wemyss on behalf of the residents of Miles Green.

THE MAYOR, MR EDDIE BODEN
Chair