

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

AT THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF LUTON HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, LUTON

ON

TUESDAY 21ST JANUARY AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

THE MAYOR -	Councillor T. Malik
THE DEPUTY MAYOR -	Councillor Lovell
COUNCILLORS -	Abid, Adrees, Agbley, Ahmed, Akbar, Ali, Bridgen, Burnett, Campbell, Castleman, D. Chapman, P. Chapman, Choudhry, Franks, A. Hussain, J. Hussain, J.I. Hussain, M. Hussain, S. Hussain, Ghulam Javed, Keens, Khan, Khurshid, Malcolm, K. Malik, Masood, Moles, Nicholls, Pedersen, Rivers, Roche, S. Saleem, T. Saleem, Shaw, Simmons, Skepelhorn, Taylor, Timoney, Underwood, Waheed, Wynn and Young.

74 MINUTES (REF: 1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 1st October 2019 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

75 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Donelon, Hopkins, Mead & Petts.

76 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor advised the Council of the sad passing on 4th January 2020, of former Councillor Zoe Moran who had served on the Council from 1995 until 1993. Former Councillor Moran had played a key role in the Council's transition

to education authority in 1997 and had been an advocate of young people throughout her career.

The Council was also informed of the death of former Councillor David Johnston on the 16th January 2020. Former Councillor Johnston had been a senior members of the Conservative Group and had served on a wide range of Committees on the Authority for almost 40 years from 1967 until 2007.

The Mayor advised that a former High Sherriff of Luton, The Countess of Erroll had passed away on 13th January 2020.

The Council stood in silent memory of former Councillors Zoe Moran and David Johnston, and The Countess of Erroll.

The Mayor congratulated Luton's two new MP's, Rachel Hopkins and Sarah Owen, on their election on 12th December 2019.

All members were reminded that the Holocaust Memorial Day 'Stand Together' was being held on Wednesday 23rd January 2020 at the University of Bedfordshire. The Mayor also referred to a note circulated at the meeting about other Mayoral engagements taking place in January, February and March 2020.

The Council was advised that the Council Budget meeting to be held on Wednesday 19th February 2020, would be held at venue 360, 20 Gipsy Lane LU1 3JH and not at the Town Hall.

77 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1 (REF: 4)

Councillor Keens asked and Councillor Castleman responded to a Question Ref: Q/02/19 of which written notice had been given under Standing Order 7.1.

Councillors David Chapman asked and Councillor Castleman responded to a Question Ref: Q/02/20 of which written notice had been given under Standing Order 7.1.

Councillor Peter Chapman asked and Councillor Castleman responded to a Question Ref: Q/03/20 of which written notice had been given under Standing Order 7.1.

Councillor Keens asked and Councillor Shaw responded to a Question Ref: Q/04/20 of which written notice had been given under Standing Order 7.1.

Councillor Keens asked and Councillor K. Malik responded to a Question Ref: Q/05/20 of which written notice had been given under Standing Order 7.1.

78 REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (REF: 5.1)

Upon consideration of the report of the Standards Committee on the approval of the revised Protocol for Member/Officer relations, it was proposed by Councillor Sameera Saleem, seconded by Councillor M. Hussain and:

Resolved: That the revised Protocol for Member/Officer relations, forming Part 10 of the Council's Constitution, be approved as set out at Appendix 1 to the report (Ref: 5.1)

79 REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (REF: 6)

Councillor Waheed, the Council spokesperson on the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority, presented the report on the proceedings of the meetings of the Authority held on 7th October and 6th November 2019,

Resolved: That the reports be received and noted.

80 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE (9TH DECEMBER 2019) – SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE (REF: 8.1)

Upon consideration of the report of the Interim Service Director, Policy Communities and Engagement on the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2020/21, it was proposed by Councillor Malcolm, seconded by Councillor Simmons and:

Resolved: (i) That the Council's net Council Tax Base for 2020/21 be set at 51,828.7 Band D equivalents as calculated in accordance with the current Regulations, "Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (SI: 2012:2914), which came into force in November 2012.

(ii) That a council tax collection rate of 96.8% be set for 2020/2021.

(iii) That as stated in the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018, amending the Local Government Finance Act 1992, implement the introduction in 2020/2021 of a 200% premium which will triple the council tax on homes left empty for 5 years or longer.

(iv) That, as stated in the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018, amending the Local Government Finance Act 1992, implement the introduction in 2021/2022 of a 300% premium which will quadruple the council tax on homes left empty for 10 years or longer.

81 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE (9TH DECEMBER 2019) – TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REPORT – HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019 (REF: 8.2)

Upon consideration of the report of the Interim Service Director, Policy Communities and Engagement on the Treasury Management Mid-Year report

ending 30th September 2029, it was proposed by Councillor Malcolm, seconded by Councillor Simmons and:

Resolved: That the Mid-year report on Treasury Management for the half year ended 30th September 2019, summarising and reviewing the Council's Treasury Management activities along with changes required to prudential indicators for Capital Expenditure, Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and Gross Borrowing, be approved.

82 REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE – APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES (REF: 9.1)

Upon consideration of the report of the Chief Executive on the filling of vacant places on Committees, it was proposed by Councillor Simmons seconded by Councillor Timoney, and:

Resolved: (i) That Councillor Asif Masood be appointed to fill the vacant seats on the Constitution Committee, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the following pools and panels:

- Discretionary Housing Payments Appeal Panel
- Foster Carer Appeals Panel
- Luton Education Teachers Appeal Panel
- Nursery Education Appeals Panel
- Personnel Appeals Panel
- Social Services Stage 3 Complaints Panel
- Appointments Panel and Redeployment Panel
- Housing Appeal & Review Panel

(ii) That Councillor Sameera Kurshid be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Scrutiny Children's Services Review Group.

(iii) That Councillors Paul Castleman and Saima Hussain be appointed to fill the two vacancies on Administration & Regulation Committee.

83 REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR POLICY COMMUNITIES AND ENGAGEMENT) – LICENSING COMMITTEE – CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP (REF: 9.2)

Upon consideration of the report of the Interim Service Director, Policy Communities and Engagement on a proposed change to the membership of Licensing Committee, it was proposed by Councillor Timoney, seconded by Councillor Malcolm and:

Resolved: That Councillor Asif Masood be appointed to the Licensing Committee with immediate effect.

84 NOTICE OF MOTION (AGENDA ITEM 11.1)

It was proposed by Councillor Burnett, seconded by Councillor Yasmin Waheed and:

Resolved: That Council:

Recognises that, whilst not designed to be legally binding, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism is an invaluable tool for public bodies to understand how antisemitism manifests itself in the 21st century and demonstrates a commitment to engaging with the experiences of Jewish communities and supporting them against the contemporary challenges they face.

Deplores the increase in antisemitic incidents in the first six months of 2019, which showed the highest total on record over a six month period and an increase of 10% on the same period in 2018, with over 100 incidents per month for the third year running.

Commits to combating antisemitism in all forms, from wherever it arises and with that in mind, formally adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, as follows:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Luton Council does not accept any kind of discrimination/perception against any individual on the grounds of any religion, nationality, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or colour.

85 NOTICE OF MOTION (AGENDA ITEM 11:2)

(a) It was proposed by Councillor Wynn, seconded by Councillor Bridgen:

That Council:

Acknowledges the efforts Luton Council has made, and is planning to make, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;

Recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity.

Recognises:

That very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so;

That making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for local organisations, including Councils, to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations;

That revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;

Understands that campaigning group Power for the People is to arrange for the reintroduction in the new parliament of the Local Electricity Bill which was supported by a cross-party group of 115 MPs in the previous parliament and which, if made law, would make the set up and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply;

Requests the Chief Executive to ask the two Luton MPs and the two local members of the House of Lords to support the reintroduction of the bill and to contact the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or infor@powerforpeople.org.uk)

(b) An amendment was proposed by Councillor Rivers, accepted by the mover of the motion and it was:

Resolved: That Council:

Acknowledges the efforts Luton Council has made, and is planning to make, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;

Recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity.

Recognises:

That very large grid connection and distribution costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so;

That making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for local organisations, including Councils, to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations;

That revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas

emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;

Understands that campaigning group Power for the People is to arrange for the reintroduction in the new parliament of the Local Electricity Bill which was supported by a cross-party group of 115 MPs in the previous parliament and which, if made law, would make the set up and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply;

Request the Chief Executive to ask the two Luton MPs and the two local members of the House of Lords to support the reintroduction of the bill and to contact the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or infor@powerforpeople.org.uk)

86 NOTICE OF MOTION (AGENDA ITEM 11:3)

It was proposed by Councillor Bridgen, seconded by Councillor Keens but upon being put to the meeting was lost:

That Council:

Acknowledges that residents of Vauxhall Park and Wigmore suffer from inconsiderate parking by people employed at or near the airport and by passengers unwilling to pay car park charges.

Notes that the Council's highways officers have carried out extensive consultation with Vauxhall and Wigmore residents on possible measures to reduce the damage to their quality of life due to this airport parking problem.

Accepts that this problem is entirely due to airport operations and would not exist if London Luton Airport was not there.

Considers that, since the parking problem is entirely caused by London Luton Airport, its customers and related employees, the airport should bear the whole and complete cost of any necessary measures introduced by the Council to reduce the damage to the quality of life of Vauxhall Park and Wigmore residents.

Requests the Chief Executive and other relevant Council officers to commence discussions with London Luton Airport Limited & London Luton Airport Operations Limited to secure their agreement to pay in full, the costs of introducing and operating any parking regulation schemes, including costs, which would otherwise be borne by the residents, designed to deal with the problem.

Calls for updates on the progress of the discussions at each meeting of the full Council.

FOR THE MOTION	Councillors Ali, Bridgen, David Chapman, Peter Chapman, Franks, Keens, Moles, Pedersen, Skepelhorn, Underwood and Wynn (11)
AGAINST THE MOTION	Councillors Abid, Adrees, Agbley, Ahmed, Akbar, Burnett, Castleman, Choudhry, Abbas Hussain, Javeria Hussain, Javid Hussain, Saima Hussain, Mahmood Hussain, Ghulam Javed, Khan, Khurshid, Lovell, Malcolm, Khtija Malik, Masood, Nicholls, Rivers, Roche, Sameera Saleem, Tahmina Saleem, Simmons, Taylor, Timoney and Waheed (29)
ABSTAINED	Councillors Campbell, Tahir Malik and Young (3)
ABSENT	Councillors Donelon, Hopkins, Mead, Petts and Shaw (5)

87 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS (REF: 12)

Resolved: That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting as it is likely that if members of the public were present during consideration of Item 13 below, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information falling within the paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

88 MINUTES (REF: 13)

Resolved: That the private minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2019 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

(Note: The meeting ended at 7:25 pm)