

MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 26 July 2017.

PRESENT: Councillors S E Bloundele (Chair), R Brady (Vice Chair), R Arundale, S Biswas, J Blyth, D J Branson, J Brunton, Mr D Budd, M Carr, D P Coupe, D Davison, S Dean, E Dryden, J Goodchild, T Harvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, B A Hubbard, N Hussain, T Lawton, L Lewis, T Mawston, D McCabe, J McGee, L McGloin, J McTigue, J Mohan, G Purvis, P Purvis, J Rathmell, C M Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, M Saunders, M Storey, Z Uddin, J A Walker, N J Walker, V Walkington, M Walters, J Young and L Young

OFFICERS: J Bromiley, B Carr, S Dorchell, L Henman, A Hoy, D Johnson, J McCulloch, A Pain, T Parkinson, S Reynolds and B Roberts

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Councillor C Hobson, Councillor J Hobson, Councillor F McIntyre, Councillor J Sharrocks, Councillor M Thompson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared

1 **MINUTES - ANNUAL COUNCIL - 31 MAY 2017, EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS - 28 JUNE 2017 (1), 28 JUNE 2017 (2) AND 28 JUNE 2017 (3)**

The minutes of the meetings of the Annual Council meeting held on 31 May 2017 and the three Extraordinary Council meetings held on 28 June 2017 were submitted for approval.

A member objected to the content of the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 28 June 2017, in respect of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, on the grounds that they did not contain comments from one of the other councillors.

The Chair advised that minutes were not meant to be a verbatim record of the meeting; the purpose was to record any decisions made at the meeting. A vote was held with regard to whether the minutes should be approved as a true record.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 31 May 2017 and the three Extraordinary Council meetings held on 28 June 2017 be approved as a correct record.

2 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

With sadness, the Chair announced the recent death of former Councillor, George Rogers.

Mr Rogers was married to Pat (who had also been a Middlesbrough Councillor) and he had a daughter, Victoria.

George represented Brookfield Ward from 2003 - 2011 and he was a member of Licensing Committee, Teesside Pension Fund, Works Council and Corporate Health and Safety Committee. George had also been Vice-Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel and a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

George had been a TV repair man who was encouraged to become involved in politics by the late Councillor, Hazel Pearson.

All present stood in silence as a mark of respect.

The Chair welcomed two new councillors to the meeting; Councillor Vic Walkington, who had been elected in the recent Ayresome by-election and Councillor Jan Mohan, who had been elected in the recent Park End and Beckfield by-election.

3 MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT

The Mayor advised that he did not intend to present a report to the meeting as all recent business was detailed in the Executive Member reports.

4 DEPUTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS

The Chair invited Members to raise items for general discussion arising from the Information Booklet of Executive Member reports which detailed activities carried out within the respective Executive Member portfolios (Section 1), Executive decisions taken (Section 2) or to be taken where known, prior to and following the meeting (Sections 3 and 4).

Members commented and posed questions in relation to the following matters and Executive Members responded where appropriate:-

a) Gresham Student Village

A member referred to paragraph 5 - page 2 of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy report and stated that she had read about the development of a high level masterplan for Gresham and the potential for the development of a student village and she queried whether there had been any further developments with the student village.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that the Council was working closely with the university who was a key partner, to look at the delivery of its long term aspirations which could include a student village, as identified in the Council's Investment Prospectus. There had been ongoing positive discussions with the university and its preferred delivery partner and plans were being developed which the Council anticipated would transform the area. Residents would be fully engaged in the process and Ward Councillors had been invited to a briefing as part of this process. The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that the Council should celebrate its achievements.

b) Middlehaven

A member referred to paragraph 2 - page 1 of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy report and stated that he had intended to ask about progress with the Dock Bridge but an article in the Evening Gazette had provided that information.

The member stated that he was concerned about the increasing cost of the bridge. He stated that he had been part of a Scrutiny Panel that had initially looked at the Dock Bridge project and at that time the original costs had been estimated between £4.5m-£5m. Since that time, the cost had been estimated at £10.4m. The original plan was to have a swing bridge but it was now proposed to have a vascule bridge which was a simpler solution. The member queried how the original estimate had been calculated as it was difficult to build provision into the capital expenditure programme if estimates were inaccurate.

The Executive Member advised that there had been problems with the original quote but it had been through a national process. The £9m had been set aside for the bridge and the road. The original estimates had been arrived at some years earlier and the revised cost of the bridge was £7.4m with contingencies built into the cost.

The Executive Members advised it was sometimes difficult to predict costs because some projects did exceed estimates. He stated that he hoped the scheme would kickstart the investment in the Snow Centre project

c) Centre Square Development

A member referred to paragraph 4 - page 2 of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy report and asked for clarification with regard to whether any tax payer's money (nationally or locally) was to be used towards funding the new developments in Centre Square.

The Executive Member advised that he had a paper from Ashalls listing the developments in detail. He confirmed that the Council were contributing to the original Masterplan but it was all private investors' money that was funding the developments in the area.

d) NPO Status for Tees Valley Museums

The Chair advised that the Executive Member for Culture and Communities had submitted apologies for the meeting and he queried whether the member posing the question would like to receive a written response.

The member stated that he would like to congratulate the Council on the works carried out at the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum. The works had been carried out to an excellent standard and he hoped that the investment would secure the future of the museum.

e) A1085 Longlands Rd/Ormesby Rd/King's Rd Junction, North Ormesby - Traffic Signal Update Scheme

A member referred to paragraph 6 - page 5 of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure report and queried why the work had taken so long to commence on the A1085 Longlands Rd/Ormesby Rd/King's Rd Junction, North Ormesby - Traffic Signal Update Scheme.

The member also referred to the major resurfacing works on Ladgate Lane past the Grove up to the top which were due to take place 3 - 13 August 2017. The member stated that the proposed works could lead to a significant gridlock in the town and he queried whether the works could have been scheduled for a different date.

The Executive Member advised that he would get some information about the Longlands link and report back to the member concerned. With regard to the Ladgate Lane works, he stated that the Council usually tried to stagger the works over a period of time however he would take the comments back to the officers concerned.

f) 30 Hours Childcare Entitlement

The Chair advised that a member had submitted a question for the Executive Member for Education and Skills regarding the 30 Hours Childcare Entitlement but had subsequently withdrawn the question.

g) The Queen's Speech and effect on Local Government finance

A member referred to paragraph 1 - page 1 of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance report and queried how the gradual reduction in the Revenue Support Grant would impact on the Council in future years, in particular, the removal of the Revenue Support Grant 2020/21.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance advised that the Revenue Support Grant was £21m for the current year, but it was due to reduce to £16.5m in 2018/19 and in 2019/20 it was due to reduce to just under £12m, prior to removal of the government grant in 2020/21. The Executive Member advised members that the information was contained in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

The assumption was that the Council would be able to retain its business rates. The current situation was that the Council paid half of its business rates back to the government and the government redistributed them. The idea of the Council retaining its business rates however appeared to have been dropped in the recent Queen's Speech.

This issue did not only have concerns for this local authority. Jo Miller, the Chief Executive of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives had stated that she was disappointed that the key legislation absolutely fundamental to ensuring the future sustainability of local government had been dropped. She had stated that local government urgently needed clarity around its

future funding as at present local authorities faced a cliff edge from 2020 and this needed to be urgently resolved.

Claire Covert, the Chair of London Councils also stated that she had been deeply concerned about the absence of discussion around the retention of 100% business rates. The Executive Member stated that when members were given the opportunity to have four year funding, they had welcomed the certainty it provided for planning for the future. The removal of that certainty meant that the Council was unable to plan well for the future. The government had indicated that Council's should raise money locally through business rates and raising council tax, following the removal of the Revenue Support Grant.

This would mean putting a cap on the Council Tax. Since the government had introduced the Social Care Levy, the assumption was that Councils would increase the Council Tax up to 3.99% and to 4.99% for the last year however Middlesbrough Council had chosen not to increase the Council Tax by the extra 1% to 4.99%. The Executive Member pointed out that in her view residents should not have to pay the Social Care levy as they were already paying for this through their taxes. The Council had uncertainty as to how they were going to meet that £12.1m cliff edge in 2021

h) Council Tax.

The Chair advised that a member had submitted a question for the Executive Member for Finance and Support regarding Council Tax but had subsequently withdrawn the question.

5 **REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

Council received and considered a report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board outlining the work of the Board and Scrutiny Panels. The Vice Chair pointed out the wide range of topics covered by the Scrutiny Panels.

A member advised that the Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee had discussed the Grenfell Tower tragedy and a report on the issues surrounding the tragedy was due to be compiled on behalf of the five Tees Valley authorities.

NOTED

6 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions for this meeting.

7 **NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION (IF ANY)**

There were no urgent motions for this meeting.

8 **POLITICAL BALANCE**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which was to recommend the allocation of vacant places on committees and sub-committees for 2017 in accordance with the revised political balance of the Council.

Following the two recent by-elections, Councillor Jan Mohan had been elected as Councillor for the Park End and Beckfield Ward and had subsequently joined the Middlesbrough Independent Councillors Association (MICA) group and Councillor Vic Walkington had been elected as Councillor for Ayresome Ward and was part of the Labour Group.

The Monitoring Officer also reported that the Marton Independent Group had been disbanded and the two former members of that group were now considered as Independent members.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** as follows:

1. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to fill the unallocated seats as indicated in paragraph 13 of the report and make any necessary further adjustments to remove or replace members where directed by the relevant group or member.

2. That any committee established prior to the next review be appointed on the basis of the places shown in Table 3 attached to the report.

9 **APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES 2017**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which was to seek approval to nominations for appointment, arising from vacancies deferred at the Annual Meeting of the Council and resignations from Committees.

Members were asked to consider nominations for appointment arising from the above.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** as follows:

1. That the following appointments nominated at the meeting, be approved and noted, until amended by Council/Executive (whichever was the latter).

Council Committees

Schedule B Appointments:

Constitution and Members' Development Committee

Councillor Lewis Young resigned from Constitution and Member Development Committee.

Councillor Mawston (Ind) appointed

Corporate Health and Safety Committee

Councillor Harvey and Councillor McGee (Lab) appointed.

Works Council

Councillor Hellaoui and Councillor McGee (Lab) appointed.

Schedule C Appointments

Licensing Committee

Councillor Mawston appointed as Independent.

Overview and Scrutiny Board

Councillor Mawston appointed as Independent. Councillor Walters (Lab) appointed.

Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel

Councillor M Saunders (MICA) appointed.

Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Davison (Ind) appointed.

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Davison (Ind) appointed.

Councillor Walkington (Lab) appointed.

Environment Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Davison (Ind) appointed.

Health Scrutiny Panel

Councillor M Saunders (MICA) appointed.

Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Davison (Ind) appointed.

Planning and Development Committee

Councillor Walkington (Lab) appointed.

Staff Appeals Committee

Councillor Walkington (Lab) appointed.

Standards Committee

Councillor Davison (Ind) appointed.

Teesside Pension Fund and Investment Panel

Councillor Dean and Councillor Lewis (Lab) appointed.

Appointments by the Council Joint Committees/Outside Bodies 2017**Better Health Programme Joint Committee**

Councillor McGee appointed.

In addition:

Councillor Lewis (Lab) replaced Councillor Storey (Lab) on Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee.

Councillor Walters (Lab) replaced Councillor Uddin (Lab) on Economic Development and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel.

At this point of the meeting a member proposed that the meeting be adjourned. A vote was taken with regard to whether the meeting be adjourned.

Members voted 30 against adjourning the meeting and 8 in favour.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** that the meeting proceed to the next item of business.

The Chair announced that the meeting would proceed to the next item of business.

10 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report informing Members of the recommendation of the Chief Officer Appointments Committee at its meeting held on 17 July 2017, recommending that, subject to ratification by Council, the post of Chief Executive be offered to Mr Tony Parkinson, currently the Interim Chief Executive.

In accordance with the requirement of Rule 4(1) of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, Council was required to approve

that decision subject to there being no objections received from members of the Executive. It was confirmed that no objections had been received.

A member pointed out that it should be the Chair of the Chief Officer Appointments Committee who should move the recommendations of that Committee.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** that the appointment of Mr Tony Parkinson as Chief Executive and Head of the Council's Paid Service be approved and a formal offer be confirmed.

The following Councillors indicated that they wished it to be recorded in the minutes that they had voted against the recommendation to approve the appointment of the Chief Executive:

Councillors Hubbard, McCabe, Mohan, Rathmell, Saunders and J Young.