

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 7th March at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor T. Munro in the Chair

Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, J.E. Bennett, R.J. Bowler, P.M. Bowmer, G. Buxton, J.A. Clifton, T.J. Connerton, C.P. Cooper, P.A. Cooper, M.G. Crane, M. Dixey, M.J. Dooley, S.W. Fritchley, H.J. Gilmour, R.A. Heffer, A. Joesbury, D. McGregor, C.R. Moesby, S. Peake, K. Reid, M.J. Ritchie, J.E. Smith, P. Smith, S.J. Statter, A.M. Syrett, R. Turner, K.F. Walker, D.S. Watson and J. Wilson.

Officers:-

D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer), L. Hickin (Strategic Director), K. Hanson (Strategic Director), S. Sternberg (Assistant Director – Governance, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer), D. Clarke (Assistant Director – Finance and Revenues & Benefits) and Nicola Calver (Governance Manager)

0672. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Cannon, B.R. Murray-Carr, E. Stevenson and B. Watson.

0673. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer gave advice to the Council reminding Members of the requirement for all Members who were tenants of a Council Property to declare an interest in respect of the decision to be made on setting the Level of Council Tax but had an automatic dispensation to remain in the room, speak and vote.

The Monitoring Officer reminded Members that each Councillor had an exemption for the declaration of an interest in the Level of Council Tax.

0674. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

The Chairman welcomed Dorothy Mellors, Tony Mellors and Graham Heasman to the meeting and advised that their questions would be taken in line with the requirements within the Councils Constitution, and would be taken in the order submitted.

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Question submitted to Councillor A. Syrett, Leader of the Council by Dorothy Mellors

*There are approx. 20 families in Blackwell who are being encouraged to sell their homes to HS2 Ltd or face compulsory purchase, and those families are experiencing great difficulties in getting a fair valuation from HS2 Ltd, and in finding comparable properties at a similar price level. The consultation documents promised that those homeowners in the Blighted or Safeguarded zone could sell now to HS2 on the basis of a Pre Blight valuation plus 10%. It is quite clear that HS2 Ltd valuations are **not** being made on a Pre Blight basis. One Newton family has already left, suffering a financial loss, rather than face continuing stress and uncertainty.*

Will Bolsover District Council ensure that HS2 Ltd are pressured to examine the valuation process and reveal the actual valuations being given, in order to compare them with similar property sold prices from 2015?

The Leader of the Council expressed her empathy to these families affected by compulsory purchase as part of the HS2 route. Bolsover District Council were engaging with the HS2 project however, the regulations around the route and associated land was very strict. The Council would apply pressure where it could on this matter and continue relevant dialogue with HS2.

Question submitted to Councillor A. Syrett, Leader of the Council by Tony Mellors

We are told that the North East Derbyshire Council will see significant economic gains from a HS2 train stopping at Chesterfield Station, while Bolsover District will see significant negative impacts economically, environmentally and socially.

Do Bolsover District Councillors agree that there is a conflict of interest for the Joint NEDC and BDC Chief Executive, who is your representative in meetings with HS2 Ltd?

The Leader of the Council was clear that Chesterfield Borough Council would be the main beneficiary of the HS2 train stopping at Chesterfield, with both North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Council receiving fringe benefits. North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils were two very separate Councils, with very different political groups. The Joint Chief Executive follows the separate policies and wishes of both, separately at any one time.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Mr Mellors asked a supplementary question asking if the Joint Chief Executive represented both Councils in Conversations with HS2. The Leader was confident that Members of Bolsover District Council and the Joint Chief Executive fairly represented the views of Bolsover district at Meetings with HS2.

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Question submitted to Councillor A. Syrett, Leader of the Council by Graham Heasman

I have recently been informed by Councillor Simon Spencer of Derbyshire County Council that they, along with other councils along the route of HS2 have been asked by HS2 Ltd. (which is an offshoot of the Department for Transport) to sign a confidentiality agreement.

This may well prevent councils from disclosing to homeowners and council tax payers information that could well be damaging to their communities and place them at a disadvantage in their dealings with HS2 Ltd. and the Department for Transport.

Have Bolsover District Council, or any of its representatives, been asked to sign any such or similar agreement and have any discussions taken place around this subject and if so what is, or would be, Bolsover District Council's position with regard to signing this type of confidentiality agreement?

The Leader of the Council confirmed that it was common practice for confidentiality agreements to be in place when dealing with commercially sensitive matters. Bolsover District Council are required to sign agreements in relation to HS2 in order to be part of the discussions around this project. If the Council were to exclude themselves by refraining from signing such an agreement, then the public of Bolsover District could not be represented on these matters. However, the Leader requested for this matter to be further scrutinised by the Legal Department and a formal response to Mr Heasman's query would be provided.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Mr Heasman asked a supplementary question in relation to the costs of the project. As the completion date was many years ahead, possibly out of some residents' lifetimes concern should be raised around the £3000 cost to each household. Mr Heasman wished for clarity on whether the Council would question this.

The Leader was aware of the overspends on the original budget and the requirements on Chesterfield Borough to cover some of the additional costs. The Leader pledged that the Council would take its role in scrutinising the costs seriously.

0675. REPORTS ON URGENCY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE

There were no urgent decisions for noting.

0676. MINUTE BOOK

Moved by Councillor T. Munro and seconded by Councillor R. Turner

RESOLVED that the minutes as printed in the Minute Book dated 21st February 2018 be noted.

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0677. RECOMMENDED ITEMS

There were no recommended items considered at this meeting.

0678. MOTIONS

No motions had been submitted under procedure rule 10 for this meeting.

0679. PROPOSED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

In light of the delay in receipt of the report due to the recent inclement weather it was proposed for the report to be deferred to the following meeting on 25th April 2018.

Proposed by Councillor A. Syrett, seconded by Councillor M. Dooley

RESOLVED that the report be deferred to the following meeting.

0680. LEVEL OF COUNCIL TAX 2018/19

Council considered a report by the Head of Finance and Resources and section 151 Officer which recommended the approval of levels of Council Tax for the 2018/19 financial year.

The Localism Act 2011 requires all billing authorities to calculate a Council Tax requirement each year. The approved demand on the Collection Fund in respect of Bolsover District Council is £3,675,609

In order to calculate the Council Tax requirement for Bolsover District Council at the relevant bands, the demands of Derbyshire County Council, the Police Authority, the Fire Authority and Local Parish Councils had been taken in to account.

The table at paragraph 1.5 of the report set out the amounts of Council Tax for the year for each of the categories of dwelling.

The report requested approval by Council for the precepts of the relevant public authorities operating in the area of Bolsover District Council in order for Council to agree the Council Tax liability for local residents in respect of 2018/19.

In line with the provisions set out within the Council's Constitution a recorded vote was taken (where matters affecting the setting of the Council's budget or Council Tax are considered).

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For the motion – 32

(Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, J.E. Bennett, R.J. Bowler, P.M. Bowmer, G. Buxton, J.A. Clifton, T.J. Connerton, C.P. Cooper, P.A. Cooper, M.G. Crane, M. Dixey, M.J. Dooley, S.W. Fritchley, H.J. Gilmour, R.A. Heffer, A. Joesbury, D. McGregor, C.R. Moesby, T. Munro, S. Peake, K. Reid, M.J. Ritchie, J.E. Smith, P. Smith, S.J. Statter, A.M. Syrett, R. Turner, K.F. Walker, D.S. Watson and J. Wilson).

Against the motion – 0

Abstentions – 0

Proposed by Councillor T. Munro, seconded by Councillor J. Ritchie

RESOLVED that

- i) the levels of Council Tax for the financial year 2018/19 as set out in the report be approved;
- ii) the Officers, as set out in section 1.6 of the report, be authorised to undertake the intended duties in accordance with section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- iii) the Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to authorise any amendments to the list of names given in 1.6 of the report as may prove necessary during the course of the financial year.

0681. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the Leader to speak to the meeting in reference to the recent adverse weather conditions. Members applauded the hard work undertaken by Bolsover District Council staff, including the refuse crews, who were undertaking additional mop up rounds in order to complete all missed collections by 7th March 2018. In addition, the crews had worked tirelessly to ensure that Council buildings were free from snow and ice to make them accessible to the public. The Customer Service and Communications Team had made sure that calls from residents were answered, as well as questions via social media, and ensuring that benefit payments were made on time.

The Chairman advised that he was proud to be raising the Commonwealth flag on Tuesday at 10 am on behalf of the Bolsover District to honour Commonwealth day.

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Further, he would be representing the Council at the Urban Design Awards where the regeneration framework had been nominated for an award.

The meeting concluded at 10:30 hours.
