

PENNINES TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday, 11 November 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Mir (Chair), Davidson, Dearnley, Emsley, Hartley, Hussain, Kelly, Paolucci, Blundell, Bamford, Taylor and Besford

OFFICERS: Tracey Knight (Neighbourhoods Directorate), Dr Fay Davies (Children Services Directorate), Anouksa Shepard Smith (Economy Directorate), Nazam Suleman (Resources Directorate)

50 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved that the following declarations of interest be noted:

a. Councillor Hartley, Emsley and Dearnley declared a personal interest in the Minute item 57 (Need for Primary School Places 2021-2024).

52 MINUTES

Further to Minute 49 of the Pennines Township Meeting held on Wednesday 16th September members considered the allocation of Section 106 Play provision. Members wanted to raise questions to why Rochdale Boroughwide Housing are not allowing to build on existing parks.

Resolved

1. That the Chief Executive of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing is invited to the next Pennine Township Committee Meeting.
2. That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Pennines Township to write a correspondence letter to the Chief Executive of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing

Resolved

That the Minutes held on Wednesday 16th September be approved as a correct record.

53 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

54 OPEN FORUM

The following issues were raised in the Committee's Open Forum session:

- a. Ladyhouse Lane

Ward Councillors of Milnrow and Newhey have received a series of complaints from residents regarding Ladyhouse Road. Cllr Kelly recommended that Ladyhouse Road should be re-surfaced immediately.

55 SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Economy which sought approval to extend the existing Stanley Brook Site of Biological Interest to include an additional 0.1 hectares of additional grassland habitat due to a resurvey. Members were also informed that GMEU has recommended that a new SBI is designated at Newhey Lodge. The reasons for this proposal is that this site supports open water habitat and the associated bat population. The site would be 0.8 hectares in size and is mainly pond and woodland plantation.

Alternatives considered

To not approve the extension.

Resolved:

1. That approval be given to the extension of the Site of Biological Interest at Stanley Brook to include an additional 0.1 hectares as detailed within the submitted report.
2. That approval be given to the new Site of Biological Interest at Newhey Lodge to include 0.8 hectares as detailed within the submitted report.

Reason for resolution

The area in question had been identified by experts as being of local biodiversity value.

56 NEED FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES 2021-2024

The Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services which detailed the need for primary school places across the Borough between 2021 and 2024. It was reported that a peak in births for the 2021/22 Primary school intake birth rates appeared to be levelling off and there had been a subsequent reduction of numbers in some area of the Borough. However in-year applications for school places continued to be high with the usual rate of key stage 1 (age 5 - 7 years) and increased numbers arriving at Year 3 and above.

Large numbers of new housing developments across the Borough, in the last few years, had impacted on the ability of the Council's school admissions team to provide school places in schools of preference, especially so in certain localities.

Forthcoming and planned housing developments especially in the Pennines, South Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood parts of the Borough meant that some expansion of the school estate would continue to be needed. In some places inability to further extend schools would require that new schools be built. Where a new school and site was being delivered through developer contributions, a trust will be needed to run the school and the 'Free School Presumption Route' would need to be followed.

The Committee was advised that this report was presented to the Cabinet, at its meeting held 29th September 2020, where the recommendations contained therein, were approved.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

57 SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES 2021 AND 2022

The Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services regarding the provision of secondary school places in the Borough in 2021 and 2022. Rochdale Council it was reported is awaiting delivery of two new mainstream Secondary schools that were being delivered by the Department for Education (DfE), through the Free School Programme. The DfE would not guarantee when the schools will open until planning consent for the schools is guaranteed and until a date for practical completion is set. Until the dates are determined the Council must work to meet its statutory obligation to offer every child living in the borough a place in Secondary school.

The Council's School's Organisation and Development Team are working closely with the DfE to deliver the new schools as soon as possible but must also plan for the scenario where any new school places are delayed.

The Committee was advised that this report was presented to the Cabinet, at its meeting held 29th September 2020, where the recommendations contained therein, were approved.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.