

## **COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Zaman (the Mayor in the Chair); Councillors Ali Ahmed, Iftikhar Ahmed, Shakil Ahmed, Daalat Ali, Sultan Ali, Bamford, Biant, Blundell, Brett, Brosnan, Burke, Dale, Davidson, Dearnley, Dutton, Neil Emmott, Susan Emmott, Emsley, Gartside, Hartley, Heakin, Holly, Hornby, Howard, Hussain, Joinson, Kelly, Malcolm, Meredith, Nickson, Nolan, O'Rourke, Paolucci, Rana, Rashid, Rowbotham, Rush, Sheerin, Angela Smith, Susan Smith, Stott, Sullivan, Taylor, Wardle, Wazir, West, Donna Williams, Winkler and Zaheer.

**OFFICERS:** S. Rumbelow (Chief Executive), G. Hopper (Director of Children's Services), J Searle (Director of Economy), N. Thornton (Director of Resources), A. Fallon (Director of Public Health), E. Newsome (Head of Governance), D. Brierley (Head of Communications), D. Beck, H. Lomax (Neighbourhoods Directorate) and P. Thompson (Resources Directorate).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Ten members of the public.

#### **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

55 The Mayor requested that the Council observe a period of silent reflection in memory of those all those people who tragically lost their lives during the recent terrorist atrocity in Christchurch, New Zealand.

#### **APOLOGIES**

56 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beswick, Boriss, Cocks, Martin, McCarthy, Mir, O'Neill, Robinson and Peter Williams

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

57 **RESOLVED:**

That the following declarations of interests be noted:-

Councillor Dearnley declared a personal interest in minute 60 (b), below – Threatened Closure of Heywood and Middleton Post Offices

Councillor Brosnan declared a personal interest in minute 61, below – Members Quarterly Reports

#### **MINUTES**

58 **RESOLVED**

1. That the minutes of the meetings of the Council held 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be approved and signed as correct records.

#### **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

59 There were no submitted questions or petitions.

## **NOTICES OF MOTION**

### a. 60 Effects of government Imposed Austerity

It was moved by Councillor Nolan and seconded by Councillor Rowbotham that:

“This council notes that following the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Government from 2010 and the solely Conservative Governments from 2015, Local Authorities have been devastated by cuts in the name of austerity.

This council notes that over the past 10 years, Rochdale Council has been forced to make nearly £200 million worth of savings.

This council believes that Rochdale Council, and virtually every other council of every political persuasion have been forced to raise council tax and make difficult decisions on where to cut, for example being forced to borrow money to repair our roads and struggling to provide care services to our most vulnerable.

This council believes that this is down to the government’s cruel austerity campaign alone.

This council notes that despite this - Rochdale Council has managed to keep afloat, keep our libraries and community centres open, repair our roads and deliver a quality Youth Service.

The council accepts that residents have every reason to be angry with the effects of Government imposed austerity whilst wages have fallen in real terms by £500 since 2010.

This council accepts that residents are angry that their local authority has had to cut on average £375 per person, per year.

This council accepts that residents are angry that they’ve seen their overall quality of life decrease over the past 9 years.

This council believes that despite the Prime Minister’s claim that “austerity is over”, councils are facing further funding gap of £7.8 billion by 2025 just to keep services ‘standing still’.

The council notes that Lord Gary Porter, the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association, has said ‘Councils can no longer be expected to run our vital local services on a shoestring’.

This council notes that Northamptonshire County Council has already gone bust due to financial mismanagement at both national and local level, but more councils are predicted to collapse through no fault of their own without immediate emergency funding.

This council believes that the Prime Minister’s pitiful offer to offset the effects of austerity was an insult to this council.

This council requests that Chief Executive write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer Phillip Hammond, detailing the effects of austerity on the residents of Rochdale and demanding that this government reverses the cuts to local authorities.

An amendment to the Motion was moved by Councillor Dearnley and seconded by Councillor Sullivan that:

“This Council notes that over the past 10 years, Rochdale Council has been forced to make nearly £200million worth of savings.

This Council notes that despite this, Rochdale Council has managed to keep afloat, keep our libraries and community centres open, repair our roads and deliver a quality Youth Service.

The Council notes that Lord Gary Porter, the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association has said “councils can no longer be expected to run our vital local services on a shoestring”. This Council supports the LGA campaign “Councils Can” to influence the forthcoming spending review.

This Council requests that the Chief Executive and Political Group Leaders write to the Secretary of State to voice our united concerns at the growing risks of the loss of vital local services if the Government does not take action to secure the financial sustainability of Councils”

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was declared to be **LOST**.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be carried and it was **RESOLVED** accordingly.

b. Threatened Closure of Heywood and Middleton Post Offices

It was be moved by Councillor Dutton and seconded by Councillor O'Rourke that:

“This council notes with disappointment the proposed closure of Heywood and Middleton Post Offices and their proposed movement into shared retail premises as part of wider post office franchising.

This council notes that reports by Consumer Focus (2012) and Citizens Advice (2016) have identified issues with the franchising of post offices to retail stores including poor accessibility for people with mobility impairments, longer queuing times, and inferior service and advice on products.

This council notes that franchising means the loss of jobs with good terms and conditions at the Post Office. Retail stores typically replace experienced post office staff with new employees in typically minimum wage part time roles. This is clearly bad for jobs in the local area and the Post Office workers

This Council believes that our post offices are a key asset for the community and the expertise and experience of staff there is invaluable.

This Council believes that the relentless franchising and closure programme of the profit making Crown post Offices, points to a lack of vision rather than the plan for growth and innovation that is needed.

This Council believes that the Government should therefore halt these closures and bring together stakeholders, including the CWU, and industry experts to develop a new strategy that safeguards the future of the Post office.

This council requests that the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council write to Government and the post office to outline this council's opposition to the closure of Heywood and Middleton's Post Offices and more generally to raise concern about the apparent managed decline of the post office network and the impact on high streets across the UK as well as the service in the franchised premises, and the poor quality jobs that result.

This council also calls on the Communities Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee to meet with retailers and the Post Office to urge a stop to the planned franchise."

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be carried and it was **RESOLVED** accordingly.

#### **MEMBERS QUARTERLY REPORTS**

61 Members presented their Quarterly Reports responding to questions and remarks from Members of the Council:-

- The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance
- The Cabinet Member for Planning, Development and Housing
- The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
- The Cabinet Member for Environment
- The Cabinet Member for Resources
- The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Business and Skills
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Care
- The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Community and Culture
- The Chair of Heywood Township Committee
- The Chair of Middleton Township Committee
- The Chair of Pennines Township Committee
- The Chair of Rochdale Township Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee report of the Chairs
- Update on the work of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the reports be noted.

#### **COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR SPECIAL CONSTABLES**

62 The Council considered a report of the Chief Finance Officer that sought approval to provide a 50% discount from the payment of Council Tax to Special Constables who live and serve in the Borough.

## **RESOLVED**

1. The Council approves the proposal to provide a 50% discount to Special Constables who live and serve in the Borough from the payment of Council Tax.
2. The Council approves the creation of a Section 13A (Local Government Finance Act 1992) policy and procedure to include the discount above.

## **PROPOSED CHANGES TO TOWNSHIPS**

63 The Council considered a report of the Assistant Director (Information, Customers) which advised Members that in January 2018, Township Chairs and a cross-party group of Elected Members had formed a working group to look at how the Council engaged with local communities, and how Townships operate. Members of the Townships Review Steering Group were appointed by Group Leaders.

The group was facilitated by Sir Steve Houghton, Leader of Barnsley Council, and officers from the Local Government Association. The Township Committees were consulted on the panel's recommendations at their meetings in October 2018.

The feedback, received included a number of proposed changes to future governance arrangements which need the approval of Council, including the restructure of the Rochdale Township Committee and revised Terms of Reference for the Township Committees

## **RESOLVED**

1. The restructure of Rochdale Township into Rochdale North Township and Rochdale South Township as follows: Rochdale North (comprising Central Rochdale, Healey, Norden and Spotland and Falinge Wards) and Rochdale South (comprising Balderstone and Kirkholt, Bamford, Castleton, Kingsway and Milkstone and Deeplish wards), be approved;
2. The relevant capital and revenue budgets for Rochdale Township be split based on population;
3. The creation of an additional Township Chair with associated Special Responsibility Allowance, approved;
4. Neighbourhood and partnership delivery models be aligned to the amended Rochdale Township areas wherever possible;
5. The Assistant Director (Legal, Governance and Workforce) be authorised to amend the Constitution to reflect revised Terms of Reference for Township Committees to include:
  - a. Recognising the different needs and priorities across Townships and neighbourhoods;
  - b. Contributions to the health and social care agenda on a local level;
  - c. To aid in the development of community resilience and co-creation of services within communities.

## **REFRAMING HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM**

64 The Council considered a report of the Assistant Director (Legal, Governance and Workforce) which advised Members that following a review of the governance arrangements of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) a number of issues had been reported as requiring revision. A number of additional factors compounded the need to reflect on the effectiveness and future operation of the HWBB, including: the Greater Manchester Public Service Reform agenda, place based and integrated working footprints and the disengagement of key partners from the HWBB.

The Health and Wellbeing Board on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019 had delegated work on frequency of meetings, membership and other technical issues to Officers in consultation with the HWBB Chair to finalise.

It was suggested that a Strategic partnership Board be established to replace the HWBB and draft terms of reference were appended to the submitted report.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. The Council approves the creation of the Strategic Partnership Board, replacing the Health and Wellbeing Board with effect from the 2019/20 Municipal Year.
2. The Council approves the draft terms of reference for the Strategic Partnership Board.
3. The Council delegates any additional amendments to the terms of reference to the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

#### **VOTE OF THANKS**

65 The Council noted that this would be the last meeting of the Council for Councillor Biant and Councillor Brosnan, the Mayor - Councillor Zaman and Members of the Council recorded their thanks and appreciation to them.

Members of the Council recorded their thanks and appreciation for the services of Councillor Zaman as Mayor of the Borough for the 2018/19 Municipal Year in both his Civic role and as Chair of the Council.