

## **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

At a meeting of the Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on Tuesday 12 December 2006 at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Hindley)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Hayward)

Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Bishop, Bone, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, N Cavill, Miss S Cavill, Clark, C Cluff, Croad, Davies, Denington, Floyd, Garner, Govier, Guerrier, Hall, Mrs M J Hill, House, Lees, Leighton, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Lisgo, Meikle, Morrell, Mullins, Murphy, Paul, Phillips, Prior-Sankey, Slattery, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Stuart-Thorn, Vail, Watson, Weston, Mrs Whitmarsh, and Williams.

### **1. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 November 2006, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

### **2. Apologies**

Councillors Coles, Edwards, Henley, C Hill, Mrs Marie Hill, Ms Priscott, Wedderkopp and Mrs Wilson.

### **3. High Sheriff's Award**

The High Sheriff of Somerset, Brigadier A I H Fyfe DL attended the meeting and made a presentation to Greg Dyke, Democratic Services Manager, in recognition of valuable services to the community.

### **4. Members' Allowances 2007/2008**

David Baker OBE, Chair of the Independent Members' Allowances Panel, reported that the panel had completed its annual review of members' allowances.

A copy of its report and recommendations had been circulated to all Councillors. It had also been considered by the Resources Review Panel at its meeting on 9 November 2005.

Details of the members' allowances scheme that had been recommended by the independent panel were submitted together with the comments made by the Resources Review Panel.

Moved by Councillor Mrs Allgrove, seconded by Councillor Davies that the recommended level of allowance for the Chair of the Planning Committee be reduced and remain at the same level as the Chair of the Review Board.

The amendment was put and was agreed.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Whitmarsh, it was RESOLVED that the existing Member's Allowances Scheme be discontinued and replaced with the scheme recommended by the Members' Allowances Panel, as amended, with effect from 1 April 2007. (Full details of the scheme are set out in the report submitted to Council).

## **5. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as a member of Somerset County Council in respect of the Museum for Somerset, Project Taunton, ISiS, Police Community Support Officers, Park and Ride, Somerset Waste, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heart of Somerset. She also declared a personal interest in respect of the UKHO as her daughter was employed on that site.

Councillor Lisgo declared a personal interest as an employee of Age Concern (Somerset).

Councillors Govier and Paul both declared personal interests as members of Somerset County Council in the items listed by Councillor Prior-Sankey.

Councillor Slattery declared a personal interest in the item relating to Unitary Bid as an employee of another District Council in Somerset.

Councillors Mrs F Smith and Mrs Marcia Hill both declared interests in all matters relating to Somerset County Council as employees of Somerset County Council.

Councillors Weston declared a personal interest as she was employed by Unison.

## **6. Unitary Bid**

Moved by Councillor Meikle, seconded by Councillor Bowrah that Taunton Deane Borough Council does not support the decision of the Somerset County Council to prepare a bid for submission to the Government seeking Unitary status for the whole of Somerset.

The motion was put and was agreed.

## **7. Gambling Act 2005 Draft Statement of Principles**

Reported that legislation required the Council as Licensing Authority to produce a Statement of Principles (also known as the Gambling Policy). A draft Statement of Principles had been developed and had been subject to extensive consultations. The Licensing Committee had also discussed the issue prior to the consultation period and details of their comments were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Principles (also known as the Gambling Policy) be adopted by the Council.

**8. The Licensing of Sex Establishments within the Borough of Taunton Deane**

Consideration had also been given by the Licensing Committee to the number of sex establishments that should be permitted within the relevant locality. Although market forces would determine how many applications were received, the Committee felt that an area should be defined in accordance with the Legislation in order to offer guidance to any future applicants.

RESOLVED that the Council adopt a policy that set the appropriate number of sex establishments in the un-parished area of Taunton as two and the parished area of Taunton Deane as zero.

**9. Recommendations to Council from the Executive**

**(a) Capital Strategy 2006-2009**

Consideration had been given by the Executive to the revised draft Capital Strategy for 2006-2009. Details of the revised Strategy were submitted. It had been updated from last years version by incorporating new developments being undertaken by the Council and refreshing the financial data included within the document.

The Strategy had also been considered by the Review Board.

RESOLVED that the Capital Strategy 2006-2009, as set out in the appendix to the report to Council, be agreed.

**(b) Museum of Somerset**

It was reported that Somerset County Council were leading the project to re-develop the Museum of Somerset into a vibrant visitor attraction which would significantly boost the local economy. A bid was to be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for financial support and in order for this bid to succeed it was essential that key partner organisations were seen to demonstrate their support. A capital contribution had therefore been requested from this Council.

RESOLVED that in order to demonstrate its support for the Museum for Somerset Project, this Council agree a capital contribution of £20,000 to be sourced by a Supplementary Estimate from General Fund reserves.

**(c) French Weir Park Match Funding for Lottery Bid**

Details were submitted of a bid for funds to improve French Weir Park.

In order to make this initial application, the Lottery required an assurance that the Council would be able to fund its share of the cost of both the project planning and final project. The inclusion of a new scheme within the capital programme was a Supplementary Estimate and as such required approval from the Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. the submission of an application for a project planning grant for French Weir Park followed by stage 1 and stage 2 applications for full project funding be agreed;
2. the allocation of the Section 106 sums arising in the vicinity of the Park for its development and improvement be agreed;
3. subject to a successful bid to the Lottery, this project be added to the approved capital programme (project costs of £900,000) it be noted that this was funded entirely from external sources including Section 106 monies already held.

(d) Providing Sports Pavilions in Taunton

The Council needed to replace the wooden sports pavilions in Hamilton Gault and Galmington Playing Fields and there was a possibility of securing significant funds from the Football Foundation to replace these facilities with the balance being found from Section 106 Agreements for sport.

The inclusion of a new scheme within the capital programme was a supplementary estimate and as such required Council approval.

RESOLVED that:

1. The work undertaken to date and the future proposals to progress this project be noted.
2. The use of Section 106 sums for playing fields and sport to match fund the applications be agreed.
3. Subject to a successful bid to the Football Foundation, this project be added to the approved capital programme (project costs of £800,000) and noted that this was funded entirely from external sources including Section 106 monies already held.

(e) Fees and Charges

The Executive had considered the fees and charges for 2007/2008 in respect of Waste Services, Cemeteries and Crematorium and Licensing. Details were submitted of the recommended fees and charges.

RESOLVED that the fees and charges for 2007/2008, as set out in the report submitted to Council, be agreed.

## 10. Questions to and Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors

The following reports were made to the Council on the main items of current and future business.

### (1) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillors Williams' report covered the following topics:

- Project Taunton
- Livestock Market Site
- Ballot for Housing Stock Transfer
- The White Paper and potential Government re-organisation
- Implementation of ISiS
- Affordable Housing
- CPA Inspection
- Ice Rink
- Re-development for UKHO
- Government Office South West Taunton visit

### (2) Communications (Councillors Gwyneth Leighton)

Councillor Leighton submitted her report which covered the following areas:

- Consultation
- Web Content and Marketing
- Public Relations
- Media Relation

### (3) Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris)

Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris' report focussed on the following areas within her Portfolio:

- Local Government White Paper
- Policy Commission
- Scrutiny Visit to Torbay
- Neighbourhood Policing
- Planning Aid
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Promoting Risky Play

### (4) Planning Policy and Transportation (Councillor Bishop)

Councillor Bishop submitted his report which drew attention to the following:

- The Planning Portal
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS3)
- Delivering Affordable Housing
- Building Control Conference
- Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan
- Park and Ride East Taunton
- Local Government Ombudsmen's Decision

(5) Environmental Services (Councillor Mrs Bradley)

The report from Councillor Mrs Bradley drew attention to developments in the following areas:

- Environmental Health
- Waste Collection and Recycling
- Public Conveniences
- Networking

(6) Economic Development, Asset Management and Tourism (Councillor N Cavill)

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:

- Wellington Food Town
- Taunton Town Centre Company
- Young Enterprise Primary Programme in Taunton Deane
- Industrial Sites
- Business Development Grants
- Rural Regeneration Team
- Tourism Development and TIC
- Creative Services

(7) Leisure, Arts and Culture (Councillor Clark)

The report from Councillor Clark dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:

- Youth Opportunities
- Blackbrook Tennis Centre
- Taunton Green MUGA
- Pavilions at Hamilton Park and Galmington Playing Fields
- The Deano
- Green Flag
- French Weir Park
- Victoria Park
- Wilton Lands
- Beechgrove Playing Field

- New Parks Nursery, Stoke Road
- Tone Leisure
- Arts

(8) Housing Services (Councillor Garner)

Councillor Garner's report focussed on the Housing Stock Transfer process and reported that the ballot was currently in progress and would close on 18 December 2006. The results would be announced the following day on 19 December 2006. Regardless of the outcome, Councillor Garner took the opportunity to thank all Council members, staff, the Tenants Forum, the Shadow Board and members of the public for the contributions to the Housing Stock Transfer process and ballot. It was something that the Council were required to do and Officers were commended for their professionalism and diligence with which they executed their duties.

In addition to Housing Stock Transfer, the day to day business within Housing Services had been maintained with minimum disruption.

(9) Resources (Councillor Hall)

The report from Councillor Hall provided information on the following areas within his Portfolio:

- Personnel
- Sick Absence
- Corporate Support
- ISiS
- Democratic Services
- Procurement
- Financial Services
- Revenues
- Benefits
- Internal Audit Services
- Corporate Property

## 11. **Transfer of the Freedom of the Borough**

The Freedom of Taunton was originally conferred on the Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry by the former Taunton Borough Council on 8 June 1946. The Regiment subsequently amalgamated and as a result the Freedom of Taunton Deane was conferred on the Light Infantry on 6 June 1985.

The Regiment would shortly be re-organised once again and would become The Rifles in the New Year. As a new Regiment was to be formed, it was necessary to formally agree to the transfer of the Freedom to the successor Regiment.

RESOLVED that the Freedom of the Borough currently conferred on the Light Infantry be transferred to its successor Regiment, The Rifles.

(The meeting ended at 9.57 pm.)



## **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

At a meeting of the Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 19 December 2006 at 7.00 pm.

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Hindley)

Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, N Cavill, Miss S Cavill, Clark, Coles, Croad, Davies, Denington, Durdan, Garner, Guerrier, Hall, Henley, Mrs M Hill, House, Lees, Leighton, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Lisgo, Meikle, Morrell, Mullins, Murphy, Paul, Phillips, Prior-Sankey, Slattery, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Stone, Stuart-Thorn, Watson, Wedderkopp, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams and Mrs Wilson.

### **1. Public Question Time**

- (i) Paul Partington asked why future meeting dates had not been included on the Council's website.

The Mayor assured Mr Partington that this matter would be looked into and a reply will be sent to him as soon as possible.

- (ii) Patricia Rowe of Tenants Against Transfer informed the Council that on behalf of the Tenants she was relieved by the result of the ballot. There was now a clear mandate for Council houses to remain with the Council and she hoped that the Council would work with tenants to help secure the necessary additional funding.

Councillor Garner reassured all tenants and members that the Council would work to mitigate as far as possible the effect on tenants of the cuts that would now have to be made. The Tenants Forum would support any such efforts.

### **2. Declarations**

Councillor Prior-Sankey declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as a tenant of a Council owned garage and Councillors Mrs Marcia Hill and Stuart-Thorn both declared personal but not prejudicial interests as Council tenants. Councillor N Cavill declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as a member of the Shadow Housing Board.

### **3. Result of the ballot to transfer the Housing Stock to Deane Housing**

This issue had been discussed in some detail at a meeting of the Executive which had taken place immediately before this meeting. Further consideration was given to the result of the housing transfer ballot where tenants of Taunton Deane had voted "no" to the transfer of Council houses to Deane Housing Ltd. Particular attention was paid to the various issues as

listed in the Minutes of the Executive meeting and the Agenda for this meeting that would now need to be addressed following the result of the ballot.

RESOLVED that the recommendation of the Executive be agreed, the plans outlined in the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 19 December 2006 be now progressed with the aim of ensuring that the Housing Service continued to deliver as good a service to the tenants of this Council as finances would permit.

(The meeting ended at 7.23 pm)