

## 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 14 December 2004 at 6.30 pm.

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Allgrove)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Lees)  
Councillors Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, N P Cavill, C A Cluff, Croad, Davies, Denington, Edwards, Floyd, Govier, Guerrier, Hall, Hayward, Mrs Hill, Hindley, House, Leighton, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Lisgo, Meikle, Morrell, Mullins, Paul, Miss Peppard, Phillips, Prior-Sankey, Ms Priscott, Slattery, Mrs Smith, Trollope, Vail, Watson, Wedderkopp, Weston, Mrs Whitmarsh and Williams

### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12 October 2004, copies having been sent to each member, were signed by the Mayor.

### 2. Apologies

Councillors Mrs Biscoe, Bone, Mrs Cluff, Durdan, Garner, Gill, Henley, Mrs Jones, Murphy, Stuart-Thorn and Mrs Wilson.

### 3. Communications

The Mayor reported that Councillor Watson had raised over £1300 for the Childrens Hospice as a result of running a sponsored marathon.

The Mayor drew attention to the Christmas Tree which had been placed in front of the Deane House and on which people had been invited to tie ribbons for servicemen who were currently overseas.

The Mayor also reported that the Chief Constable of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Steve Pilkington, would be undertaking a sponsored cycle ride around all the Police Stations in Somerset to raise money for the proposed new Somerset Childrens Hospice. He would be in Taunton on 19 December and Councillors were invited to sponsor him.

### 4. Public Question Time

- (i) Mr Paul Partington referred to representations made by him to the Local Plan concerning a cycle way between Bishops Lydeard , Cotford St Luke and Taunton.

As a result of his representations a cycle way had been constructed at Burge Farm together with a number of other cycle routes at Cotford St Luke. A subsequent development had meant this could not now be used as a cycle path.

He asked:

- a) Why Taunton Deane had allowed the cycle route near Burge Farm to be lost;
- b) What was Taunton Deane going to do to enable a cycle route to connect from Cotford St Luke Development into Burge Lane, and
- c) Undertaking to be given by Taunton Deane Borough Council to fund the cost of section of new cycle way.

Councillor Bishop replied that he would make further enquiries and arrange for Mr Partington to receive a reply.

- (ii) County Councillor Mrs Maureen Lawrence referred to the recent incursion of gypsies at North Curry and asked what the Council had done to identify a suitable site for gypsies within the Borough.

Councillor Williams replied that although Local Authorities have power to evict in such cases, any such action was unlikely to be supported by other bodies such as the Planning Inspectorate and the Judiciary. The Council had demonstrated that it was well provisioned for gypsies and traveller sites. There were more such sites in Taunton Deane than in any other district in the area.

- (iii) Mr Harris referred to a number of questions that had been asked previously in relation to Mr S Robins and properties in his ownership.

Councillor Williams replied that a letter had recently been sent to Mr Robins setting out outstanding items. Both Mr and Mrs Robins had been asked to let the Council have a list of what they considered to be outstanding issues. Unfortunately Mr Robins had chosen not to respond. The questions previously submitted were considered to have been covered in correspondence many times in the past.

- (iv) Miss D Robins also asked a number of questions on behalf of her father Mr S Robins.

Councillor Williams informed the Council that he was currently unwilling to deal with questions from Miss Robins following an incident at a recent meeting at Executive.

## 5. Members Allowances

Mr 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 11 November 2004.

Details of the Members Allowances Scheme that had been recommended by the Panel were submitted.

These recommendations had been considered by the Council's own Resources Review Panel at its meeting on 11 November 2004. The Panel had recommended that the recommendations of the Independent Members Allowances Panel be agreed.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Whitmarsh it was RESOLVED that the existing Members Allowances Scheme be discontinued and replaced with the scheme recommended by both the Members Allowances Panel and the Resources Review Panel with effect from 1 April 2005.

6. Car Parking Charges 2005/2006

Submitted recommendations from Councillor Bishop, Executive Councillor, Planning and Transportation following a meeting of the Traffic Regulation Order Panel held on 21 October 2004.

Moved by Councillor Hayward, seconded by Councillor Hindley that the recommended parking tariffs for 2005/2006 be amended to enable a 10% discount to be offered to all season ticket holders.

The amendment was put and was agreed.

On the motion of Councillor Bishop it was RESOLVED that subject to the amendment which would enable season ticket holders to obtain a 10% discount, the car parking charges for 2005/2006 shown in the Taunton Deane Borough (Off-Street Parking Places) (Number 25 Amendment) Order 2004, as set out in the report submitted, be agreed.

7. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Strategy

The Executive had considered a Strategy which would enable the Council to achieve compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Community Leadership Review Panel had also considered the Strategy and had recommended that the Executive support the Strategy and it be adopted by Council.

Full details of the Strategy, together with an explanation of how it was intended to be implemented, had previously been circulated to all Councillors.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris it was RESOLVED that the Disability Discrimination Act Strategy for Taunton Deane be formally adopted.

(b) Licensing Policy

The Executive had also given consideration to a draft Licensing Policy. This was something that all Local Authorities had to do in line with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003. Each Licensing Authority was required to publish a policy framework document every three years. The Health and Leisure Review Panel had also considered this matter. A copy of the draft Licensing Policy had been circulated to all Councillors.

On the motion of Councillor Edwards, it was RESOLVED that the Licensing Policy, as submitted to the Executive at its meeting on 8 December 2004, be adopted.

(c) Fees and Charges

The Executive had considered the fees and charges 2005/2006 for the following services:

Land Charges  
Licensing  
Cemeteries and Crematorium

In previous years the proposed fees and charges for the forthcoming year were considered as part of the budget setting report. This year however, in order to allow a greater degree of debate, the proposed fees and charges for 2005/2006 were presented to this meeting of the Council.

The proposed fees and charges had also been considered by the Review Board.

On the motion of Councillor Edwards it was RESOLVED that the fees and charges for 2005/2006, as set out in the reports submitted to Council, be agreed.

8. 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.

(i) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillor Williams report covered the following topics:

- A358 and Silk Mills
- Budget Setting
- Incursion of Gypsies
- Vision for Taunton
- Adoption of Local Plan
- Cornhill Wellington
- Launch of the New Atrium at Somerset College of Arts and Technology

(ii) Planning Policy and Transportation (Councillor Bishop)

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

- Building Control Conference
- Planning Delivery Grant
- Temporary Stop Notice
- Changes to Planning Fees
- Transportation Items of Interest

(iii) Leisure Arts and Culture (Councillor Mrs Bradley)

The report from Councillor Mrs Bradley dealt with:

- Cultural Forum
- Green Flag Awards Day
- Victoria Park
- Vivary Park
- Events
- Parks Newsletter
- Parks Website
- Review of Open Spaces in Wellington
- Physical Activity Levels in Taunton Deane
- Wellsprings
- Taunton Aquathlon
- Exercise Referral Scheme
- Networking

(iv) Economic Development Asset Management and Tourism (Councillor N P Cavill)

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:

- Lyons Review
- Sale of Land at Wiveliscombe
- Business Property Survey
- Tourism
- Rural Renaissance Steering Group
- Innovative Market Towns
- Agricultural Development Officer
- Asset Management

(v) Environmental Services (Councillor Edwards)

Councillor Edwards submitted his report which covered the following issues:

- Environmental Protection Team
- Health and Safety Team
- Food Safety

- Licensing Unit – which he thanked for their work in the development of a Licensing Policy
- Cemeteries and Crematorium
- Waste Services

(vi) Housing Services (Councillor Garner – submitted by Councillor Williams)

Councillor Garner's report covered:

- Housing Stock Options
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Sheltered Housing Scheme

(vii) Resources (Councillor Hall)

The report from Councillor Hall provided an update on the following areas of his portfolio:

- Personnel
- Office Services
- Customer Services
- Financial Services
- Electoral Services
- Benefits
- Revenues
- Internal Audit
- Information Systems

(viii) Communications (Councillor Gwyneth Leighton)

Councillor Leighton submitted her report which covered the following areas:

- Crisis Communications
- Media and Monitoring
- Communications Strategy
- Publications Audit
- Deane Dispatch
- Weekly Bulletin

(ix) Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris)

Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris submitted her report which covered:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Equalities
- Ward Profiles
- Regional Assembly

9. The Constitution

Submitted a recommendation from the Community Leadership Review Panel which was responsible for overseeing the use being made of the Councils formal Constitution and to recommend changes when necessary. At the Review Panel on 9 November 2004, the Council were recommended to approve an amendment to the Constitution to provide for a Licensing Committee to be established to deal with the matters arising from the Licensing Act 2003.

The Licensing Committee would be a regulatory committee and both Executive and Non-Executive Councillors could serve on it. The Committee would be politically balanced based on the proportionality rules which gave a composition of 9 Conservatives, 4 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour and 1 Independent. A Licensing Sub-Committee comprising three members whose main function would be to hear contested applications for new licences or variations to existing licences would not need to be proportionally balanced.

On the motion of Councillor Denington, it was RESOLVED that the Constitution be amended to the following effect.

- (a) Establishing a Licensing Committee made up of a membership of 15 comprising 9 Conservatives, 4 Liberal Democrats, 1 Labour and 1 Independent to discharge the Licensing functions detailed under the Licensing Act 2003 and the powers and duties of the present Licensing Board as detailed in Part 3 of the Constitution and;
- (b) The Monitoring Officer being authorised to effect all necessary amendments to the Constitution in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Community Leadership Review Panel so as to incorporate the establishment powers and duties of the Licensing Committee and to circulate the resulting changes to all Councillors.

(The following Councillors left the meeting at the times indicated. Councillor Bowrah 6.55pm, Councillor C Cluff 7.50pm, Councillor Mullins 8.37pm, Councillor Govier 8.45pm, Councillor Morrell 8.50pm).

(The meeting ended at 8.59pm).